TAKAYA KAGAMI
鏡貴也
ILLUSTRATION
山本ヤマト
YAMATO YAMAMOTO
終わりのセラフ
Seraph of the end
一瀬グレン、16歳の破滅
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講談社ラノベ文庫
二次元秘店漢化組
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終わりのセラフ
Seraph of the end
一瀬グレン、16歳の破滅
喂 小百合
是！
你碍着我走路了
但是离遠了的話就無法保護您了！
Oi, Sayuri.
Yes!
You're making it hard for me to walk.
But if I leave your side, I can't protect you!
二次元秘店漢化組
www.ecymo.net

柊暮人
一瀨グレン
……啊～真是的，你這家夥，真是惹人厭。
那套誇張的理論，到哪去了？
……欸？有點那種小孩子氣的事情感興趣的家夥嗎？
..... Ah- seriously, you're really an annoying guy.
Didn't you say you wanted to prove who was stronger?
..... Eh? A guy who's still interested in such a childish thing exists?
二次元秘書漢化組

……呵。人類對鬼的駕馭能力
竟已達到如此地步了嗎。不賴嘛你
..... Heh. Humans have already come up with such technology to control the demons? Not bad eh, you guys.
二次元秘店漢化組
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Volume 2 Prologue – A Subordinate's Love

When exactly did I first notice my real feelings?

This is a love between two people with different statuses.

The Hanayori House is sworn to protect the House of which Guren-sama is born into to the death——

As for me, I am born into this house of servants.

So, this is a love that absolutely cannot exist——as it should be.

Ten years ago, on that day.

Everything stems from that incident.

"…… Uhm, Guren-sama, are you feeling alright?"

I called out my master's name.

I didn't know whether I said it too softly, because it seemed that Guren-sama hadn't heard me.

Inside the bedroom of the Ichinose mansion.

Behind the sliding door, I heard a groan of pain coming from Guren-sama.

I heard from Father that yesterday Guren-sama got into some trouble with some masters from the Hiiragi House. Not only did he receive a few fractures, his face was also bruised all over and he developed a high fever.

Of course, as retainers to the Ichinose House, the Hanayori House had been summoned to discuss future measures.

And I, who had been brought up to exclusively attend to Guren-sama, was ordered to stay by Guren-sama's side.

But, I was about five years old then.

I didn't understand the affairs of the adults, and even the intense feelings of loyalty to my master——I completely lacked that as well at that time.

Simply put, my parents who brought me into this world just to serve the Ichinose House, I had some doubts about that.

But there I was, I just followed the order.

So hearing the anguished cries of the boy behind the sliding doors, I felt only pity for him, not anger towards those who hurt him.

But, this was my mission.

My parents had given me this task to attend to him.

So once again, I asked.

"…… Guren-sama, are you in pain?"

As soon as I spoke, I heard a "don" sound coming from inside the room, as though something had been hit.

I froze for a moment, but reacted right after. Had something happened to my master?——I immediately got up, my hand ready to open the door.

This instinctive reaction was the result of my training and education, not because of my feelings of loyalty. My body had been trained to protect Guren-sama.

I put my hand on the sliding door.

And gently opened it slightly.

That moment, I heard another “don” sound, as though something was being hit.

From the gap, I saw the source of the sound.

Guren-sama who had crawled out of his covers had hit his fist hard on the tatami mat.

This five-year-old boy, who had broken bones and bruises all over, was hitting the tatami mat over and over again, his face unwilling to show his pain,

“…… Damn, dammit! It’s because I don’t have any power……”

This time, he noticed me.

And I would never forget the look on Guren-sama’s face.

No, to be exact, it was his eyes.

His incredibly black eyes, completely filled with hatred, but still so mesmerising.

Guren-sama was crying.

His face was full of tears, and he cried with such regret, pain, and loneliness.

Yet at the same time, I heard Guren-sama’s voice.

“Sayuri, is it?”

“…… Yes.”

“Open the door. I’m already awake.”

“…… Yes.”

Hearing his order, I put my hand on the sliding door.

But, I didn’t want to open it. Seeing my own master crying like that, I felt very awkward and I didn’t know what to do. Also, I had never seen a boy my age cry like that.

While I hesitated opening the door, it had already been opened from the inside.

And out walked Guren-sama.

“…… Ah.”

I raised my head to look at him and realised he had already stopped crying.

His face was still bruised and he looked like he wasn't meant to be standing up because of his injuries, but my master looked down at me and said.

"…… I've made you worry. You can go back now."

"But."

I was unable to stop him, and Guren-sama had already left his room.

I had better stay by his side.

Guren-sama stood barefooted in the backyard and looked up at the sky emotionlessly.

I still remember it clearly, the crescent moon on that night.

It looked like the crescent moon on the emblem of the religious organisation that we belong

to, 『Mikado no Tsuki』, so thin and sharp that you might be scratched if you touched it.

Staring at the crescent moon, Guren-sama said.

“Sayuri.”

“Yes.”

“How long have I been asleep for?”

“One whole day.”

“Were you standing watch outside the whole time?”

“Yes.”

“Then I’ve really troubled you. You can go home now.”

Hearing this, I shook my head.

“No. To look after Guren-sama is my duty.”

I didn’t expect Guren-sama to laugh at my response.

“…… Hah. Duty? How does a brat get these feelings of loyalty?”

I felt angry when I heard his reply. I wanted to tell him “you’re a brat yourself too”.

The adults had taught me every day that I need to be loyal to Guren-sama. The value of my presence depended on the level of loyalty I had towards Guren-sama.

But he actually doubted my loyalty, what on earth did this mean……?

Almost as if to answer my question, he turned around and said.

“…… Sorry. For what I just said. It’s because you saw me crying like that just now, so I felt embarrassed by it.”

“Ah……”

“To let you see such an ugly scene. Surely it is also humiliating for the retainers to have such an embarrassing master. I promise this will never happen again, forgive me, Sayuri.”

After Guren-sama had finished speaking, he gave me a shy smile.

“……”

At that moment, my fate had been decided.

Knowing exactly the burdens that my master carried, knowing his responsibilities as the future head of the 『Mikado no Tsuki』. It was not because of these rational reasons.

Surely, slowly, I started to like him.

The boy in front of me who was the same age as me.

The boy with the lovely smile, though obviously so fragile, the sadder he was, the stronger he became.

And just like that, ten years have passed.

But my heart feels the same.

From that day onwards, I never saw Guren-sama cry again. Guren-sama has become stronger, fit to become the next head of the Ichinose House, but all this while, I always thought that he felt a little lonely.

I always thought that maybe, he has never told me how he really feels I suppose?

About what happened that day, I only found out a few years later.

It turns out that it was the daughter of the Hiiragi House——Hiiragi Mahiru, that Guren-sama had a dispute with.

A love between two people with different identities.

A love between two people with different statuses.

"……"

Whenever I think about this, I can't get to sleep.

But, at least I still can be,

"…… I can be by Guren-sama's side to protect him."

Today, I mutter these thoughts while I walk closely by Guren-sama.

This is the route to the school.

At the end of the road is First Shibuya High school, run by the Hiiragi House where everyone is an enemy.

If I walk closely to Guren-sama, he will definitely say.

"Oi, Sayuri."

"Yes!"

"You're making it hard for me to walk."

"But if I leave your side, I can't protect you!"

"It's fine so just leave me. You're in the way."

But I step closer towards Guren-sama.

Guren-sama raises his eyebrow,

"…… Seriously, my own subordinate isn't listening to me at all."

"Eheheh ♡"

"Don't eheheh me. Just get out of my way."

"I can't. If I leave your side, I can't protect my master……"

“Cut it out!”

Seeing Guren-sama’s frustrated face, I can’t help but laugh.

The way things are now, I’m fine with it.

Today, I’m fine with it.

Until Guren-sama meets the woman he’s destined to be with.

Until then, a little is fine, by his side——

Volume 2 Chapter 1 – A Lion in Hiding

The sun was slowly becoming glaring.

The start of summer.

“……”

Ichinose Guren wore his collared uniform, in a bad mood, he unclasped his top collar button,

“…… It’s so hot.”

And complained quietly.

The location was the exercise field of First Shibuya High School.

Guren squinted his eyes to shield himself from the glaring sun and looked up.

Standing in front of him was a girl with red hair with a strong aura who was screeching at him.

“Hey you rebel, what are you looking around for?”

Piercing eyes, pale skin. Her sailor uniform showed off her slender waist.

Juujou Mito.

In an instant, she shortened the distance between herself and Guren. And,

“Ha!”

With a loud roar, her fists attacked.

This was a record. Most students wouldn’t be able to react to this speed.

For Guren, he could easily dodge her attack.

“……”

But he pretended not to notice,

“Hm? What is it?”

And didn’t react to it.

But Mito’s fist stopped just right before Guren’s face. She glared at him and said.

“What is this? Completely no reaction, Guren? Are you sure you’re fit to be the next head of the Ichinose House?”

She asked.

Guren looked at Mito and replied.

“What?”

“Seriously, if someone like you becomes the head, it will only encourage other people to mock you!”

Looking at Mito’s provocative expression, Guren shrugged and said.

“Ah yes, I’m just a good for nothing from the Ichinose House. It’s only because of my bloodline that I’m able to become the next foolish head.”

That was a complete lie.

In fact, from birth, Guren had been entrusted into the care of the religious organisation『Mikado no Tsuki』which the Ichinose House belongs to, and had always carried through those annoying expectations.

When he was born, Guren’s ability for sorcery was lacking but he had the advantage of physical ability——he had to improve his skills in order to one day defeat the 『Mikado no Oni』——this was what he had been instilled with.

This was why Hiiragi House of 『Mikado no Oni』 had been ignorant of Guren’s existence. The Ichinose House had taken great pains to hide this fact. Even until today, no one knew the real power of the Head of the Ichinose House.

Of course, even if his power was not deliberately concealed, the Hiiragi House has absolutely no concern over Guren.

The weak, powerless branch family was not even worth mentioning.

Guren smiled sheepishly. Mito seeing this opened her mouth.

“Do you know what a person who smiles like that even after being humiliated is called?”

“No idea.”

“Scum.”

Guren laughed at her words.

“So you’re planning to call me this every day?”

Mito clenched her fist again. Her speed was not fast. But Guren still pretended not to notice it.

Her fist hit Guren’s left shoulder.

The pain spread throughout his shoulder.

Guren wanted to put on a pained expression, but would it look too fake? Thinking about this, he hesitated a little.

While he hesitated,

“…… So why on earth are you smiling? Being ridiculed like that, don’t you have any shame?”

Mito asked angrily.

Guren didn’t reply.

“……”

Actually, there is nothing to regret.

Truthfully, I still don’t have enough power to defeat the Hiiragi House, so I have no choice but to be ridiculed.

Of course this sounds very extreme. But, to show even half my strength and to be praised for it, what’s the use of that as well?

Mito opened her mouth.

“So you don’t even want get stronger?”

“……”

“Do you actually want to be looked down upon?”

“……”

“Can you seriously even call yourself a man?”

Mito interrogated him continuously.

The other students on the exercise field have all stopped.

A few of them looked on with contempt while they laughed at Guren.

Since being admitted in April, the situation still has not changed. I am just a piece of worthless trash from the Ichinose House.

This was Guren's position.

But daughter of the Juujou House, loyal to the Hiiragi House, Mito,

"…… Alright come with me, be a bit more serious. I'll help you with your training."

And said to him.

Guren looked at Mito, a bit troubled, and thought to himself.

It really was a mistake to save her life. I just pretended it was just a stroke of luck, but I never thought she would be this grateful, and she's becoming closer to me.

Guren replied.

"Oi, Mito."

Hearing this, Mito immediately raised her fist rather aggressively, a cute smile formed on her face.

"Ha, so you've finally become a little more energetic….."

But she was interrupted,

"You've been talking to me nonstop, does this mean you're in love with me?"

And heard what Guren had just said.

Mito widened her eyes. Her cheeks burning up, and then,

"Wha, whawhawhawhawhat what on earth are you saying!?"

Her face had become very angry.

Guren continued.

"What? Am I wrong?"

"Of course you're wrong! The daughter of the famous Juujou House, how on earth can I fall for someone from the Ichinose House……"

"Then why are you still pestering me?"

"It's, it's because when I look at your face, I get so upset!"

"Heh, you're really so nosy."

"What? Your attitude……"

Guren opened his mouth to interrupt her,

"You're really annoying."

And then,

"Ah……"

It looked like Mito had been hit from her expression. Maybe it was sadness, maybe it was

loneliness.

But Guren does not stop.

“I don’t want to become strong. And I hate working hard. So you and your natural genius classmates should just become strong on your own together. If you stick around with trash like me, you’ll become their rival.”

Mito glared at Guren,

“…… I see. I’m really stupid to have expected more of you.”

“Ah, yep.”

“Besides, the trash from Ichinose House is really trash after all.”

“Since you finally understand, please leave me alone……”

Hearing this, Mito stepped forward and raised her fist again. Guren could see what was coming to him clearly.

But he didn’t move.

Then her fist hit Guren squarely on his left cheek.

“Guh!”

With a shout, Guren went flying in the direction of the hit.

Across the road, Mito shouted.

“…… I don’t ever want to talk to trash like you again, you hear me! Don’t even come find me!”

Mito walked away angrily.

Guren stared at her back as she walks off, and then,

“Ah…… really so troublesome.”

He sighed and looked up at the sky.

There was another annoying guy at the side, secretly looking on.

Goshi Noborito.

This guy has a reputation for hating me, so I don’t know why he’s always hanging around.

Goshi opened his mouth to speak.

“Aah aah, you’ve made her angry. That was really cruel, Guren.”

“What are you talking about?”

“This is how it is. Mito, she… She’s been working really hard so that the person who saved her doesn’t get bullied as much.”

“Who asked her to be so nosy?”

Goshi laughed,

“Ah, I also hate putting in effort, so I can understand this point~”

Guren got up and snorted at Goshi’s words.

“Ha, for someone who hates hard work, how I become strong like you?”

“Nope, nope. ‘You’re born into the Goshi House’, I was simply just forced by my parents to work hard. I suppose it’s the same for you?”

Goshi said while laughing.

“So what you’re saying is I can be strong if I just put in effort every now and then? You really make people angry with your words. Don’t you know that no matter how much effort is put in, ordinary people can’t be helped?”

Goshi looked at him,

“Ah, sounds like you have tried.”

“……”

“I’ve tried but failed, so I just gave up and ran away from it all.”

Guren replied.

His words were half true.

Up till now, I’ve been desperately trying. Frantically, desperately trying. And up till now, still nothing.

Still not able to defeat the Hiiragi House.

Unable to stop Mahiru from being consumed by power, unable to stop her from being deluded by 《Hyakuya Church》*.*

I can’t save anyone if I have no power.

So I haven’t achieved anything. And I never ever thought about just running away from it.

I never wanted anyone to understand how I really feel.

Goshi said,

“But ah, Guren. Escaping only brings you pain eh?”

“Haha, so you’re lecturing me now? Don’t make me laugh.”

“Nope, I’m not lecturing you.”

“You’re really annoying, aren’t you?”

Goshi laughed again.

“Haha, forget it, since your reaction is like this…… But no matter what, you have my thanks for saving my life…… And since we still have to see each other in school for three more

years. When you graduate, you should have a little more power, and you'll thank Mito and I……"

"If you really want to repay me, then leave me alone. I don't have a need for such friends."

Faced with Guren's refusal, Goshi laughed,

"…… Haha, I've also been through this phase. The complaints of being born into a noble house. To be honest, I'm tired of hearing it."

His tone seemed to imply he knew everything.

I don't know what this guy who's been born into this noble house has experienced. But I don't really care to find out.

So Guren showed an uninterested expression.

Not expecting Goshi to laugh,

"Forget it, let's just get along since we are classmates."

Then turned around and walks off.

Guren looked at Goshi as he walked away, then, when both Goshi and Mito had left, the other students started yelling out.

"Oi, the trash from Ichinose House, are you slacking off?"

"Get up, be our opponent this time. We'll fix you up."

Guren was surrounded by them.

Guren looked around and muttered.

"…… Seriously, these guys are still easier to deal with."

Mindful of this, Guren smiled.

The number of students are different from when school started.

This is of course expected. In April, Shibuya First High School was attacked by an unknown religious and more than half of its students were killed.

Many first years who were not strong enough died. The school originally had 600 students, now there is only 180 left.

The number of classes also reduced to five. Half his classmates have changed——but it doesn't matter because I don't even remember the faces of these people, so it's alright.

Despite the change in classmates, the『Mikado no Oni』*students are still doing the same thing.*

Still teasing the branch Ichinose House, boasting they are superior, and worshipping the Hiiragi House.

"Oi, are you deaf, trash?"

A student walked up to Guren and kicked him hard in the chest.

But Guren didn't move.

"Guh!"

He groaned loudly at them.

The students all laughed.

Then towards the end,

"Oi oi, if you want to bully the weak, then you shouldn't touch them. You might catch the Ichinose House germs if you're not careful."

A voice appeared.

An unnaturally clear voice.

Guren looked in the direction of the voice

But the other students reacted faster.

"Ah, Shinya-sama!?"

The girls screamed out.

Where the girls were staring at stood a man.

A man belonging to the most privileged class.

Hiiragi Shinya.

Snow white hair. Collared uniform. A perfect smile on his lip, a sharp look on his face.

Those eyes looked straight at Guren and said.

"Let me do the job of bullying this piece of trash, everyone else go concentrate on your own training."

With those words, the students dispersed from Guren's side.

Here, this is the place.

A place that will decide everything.

This is the place where any command given by the Hiiragi House, the ones who rule 『Mikado no Oni』*, will have to be obeyed without complaints even if it means sacrificing your life.*

As for the recent attacks here, there were hundreds of fifteen- to sixteen-year-old deaths.

A massacre that occurred in the middle of Shibuya.

Yet there was no mention of it in the news.

『Mikado no Oni』*immediately issued a gag order in order to reassure everyone and stated that they had already punished the criminals who started the attack——this is untrue.*

In this regard, the students just have to believe and not question, this is what they have been taught.

Guren looked at Shinya whose presence caused the other students to disperse like spiders coming out from the larvae and quipped.

"…… Here we go, as always what astonishing power, obviously since you're the adopted son."

That's right. This man called Hiiragi Shinya, actually doesn't have the Hiiragi blood flowing in him.

From birth, in order to ensure an excellent heir for the Hiiragi House, he has been trained from young, like a stud horse.

And the woman he was meant to marry in order for him to inherit the Hiiragi blood——Mahiru.

That was what was meant to be happen, before Mahiru disappeared.

"……"

Shinya walked to Guren's side, looked down at him and said.

"You're always pretending when you get bullied eh~"

Guren laughed.

"Ah, and who called me trash?"

"Haha…… you're only able to endure it because you're so strong like a monster."

"…… I was born very patient. I'm different to those brats who like to boast of their strength."

"Who do you mean?"

"You, of course."

Shinya looked at Guren and laughed.

"Aha. That's a really lousy provocation."

"Not provocation, it's a fact."

Saying that, Guren stood up and looked at Shinya.

Our heights were about the same. Similar physiques as well. It must be that Shinya has outstanding talent in sorcery. Otherwise, I might have been chosen to be Mahiru's fiancé.

Then, how will he fare against me?

"……"

Guren thought about this.

I haven't fought seriously with him, so if it came down to that, will I be able to win?

Guren thought about this as he spoke.

“So, what of it? Why do you bother talking to me? If you really hate the Hiiragi House and want to get rid of them, then don’t bother me and just go do your own thing to your heart’s content.”

Shinya was still smiling as he replied.

“I’m saying your attitude is really not too easy-going. Why don’t we find a café and talk about future plans as we drink some red tea……”

But he was interrupted,

“Ha?”

“I knew you would say that.”

Shinya laughed.

But Guren ignored him.

“I have no interest in your fantasy. Get lost.”

“Ahh, then, shall we exchange information?”

“Ah? You have some valuable information?”

“Only after I’ve mentioned this, then you change your mind. Forget it, actually I don’t have any information that might interest you…….”

“Then you better get lost.”

“Alright, alright, take it easy. I’ll tell you what the Hiiragi House plans to do.”

Shinya suddenly blurted.

It must be regarding the attack in April, about how 『Mikado no Oni』 *plans to deal with that.*

The ones who instigated the attack 《Hyakuya Church》 *invited me to join them, so I knew the identity of the enemy, but it seemed that the Hiiragi House knew nothing of this when they attacked.*

Of course, it’s already been more than a month, who knew what the Hiiragi House have come up with in their investigations.

“…… So what’s the progress with their investigations?”

Shinya replied.

“They have already figured out the identity of the enemy.”

“《Hyakuya Church》?”

“Yes. Things have gotten complicated. It seems that behind the scenes the two most powerful religious organisations have already started a war. The whole country might end up becoming completely destroyed.”

Faced with this information, Guren was only concerned about what happens after.

“It doesn’t matter what you think. Continue.”

Originally, the Ichinose House was in favour of war. In the midst of the battle between these two, even the branch family in charge of the weak 《Mikado no Tsuki》 may be able to find an opportunity.

Of course, Shinya had already figured Guren’s way of thinking, and he should also want to make use of this opportunity. But in the end, Shinya’s ambitions regarding his revenge against the Hiiragi House was still unclear.

Guren asked.

“And?”

Shinya laughed and said.

“I’ve already given you a report, aren’t you going to tell me something in return?”

“Not possible.”

“Ahaha, so you’re saying my report wasn’t enough?”

“I’m not the same as the idiot whose motive is still unclear and just blurts out any information.”

Hearing this, Shinya asked.

“And by idiot you mean?”

“You, of course.”

“Ahaha.”

Shinya continued laughing.

“Then, do I need to disclose more information in order to win your trust?”

“……”

Guren silently observed Shinya.

Shinya was the first to speak.

“Internal investigations have already begun.”

Guren nodded.

“Of course. To organise such an attack, it’s not possible without the help of an insider. But, specifically this means……”

“Yes, they still haven’t discovered that Mahiru was the traitor. They still treat her like the head of the family, and her father Hiiragi Tenri-sama also believes in her.”

“……”

“She has more potential than the current Third Year Representative Hiiragi Kureto——everyone is looking forward to it.”

Guren laughed when he heard this.

“Naturally, as her fiancé, you must be very proud.”

Shinya just shrugged at Guren’s sarcastic tone and said.

“Isn’t she your ex-girlfriend?”

“That was such a long time ago. I’ve already forgotten about it.”

“Mahiru was always talking about you.”

“Ah, so? You’re jealous?”

Then, Shinya,

“Haha, actually, I am a little.”

And replied.

Guren looked at Shinya. Shinya was still smiling and it was difficult to read his true feelings.

“The internal investigations is being organised by the Student President Hiiragi Kureto. You’ve probably already been red flagged.”

Guren heard Shinya and replied.

“But why? I’ve been desperately pretending to be a useless piece of trash.”

“Aha, but you have a motive, right?”

“……”

“At this school, the number one outsider who hates the Hiiragi House the most is……”

“Ichinose House?”

“Exactly.”

“Then, my subordinates……”

Guren was worried about Shigure and Sayuri’s safety.

Shigure and Sayuri were transferred to the class next door because of the number of classes that were cut.

Shinya replied.

“But you’re still the first one they suspect. Shigure and Sayuri’s powers have already been revealed. From the sorcery selection examinations, you can tell that they do not possess that kind of capacity.”

“Then, surely mine is much lower than theirs?”

“No no, I’ve secretly looked at your evaluation……. ‘He could not have possibly survived due to his level of incompetence’——That was what was reported. So that’s why you are suspected. In fact, you’re being observed right at this moment. Do you realise it?”

At his question, Guren replied.

“Monitoring is already so commonplace here. So, from which side?”

“The school building. Year 3 Class 1 window. But don’t look directly. Otherwise, he’ll notice.”

I’m not that stupid.

From young, I’ve been careful enough not to be noticed by the Hiiragi House, that’s how I have survived.

So that was why Guren pretended to stretch his neck. In that moment, he glanced over at the window that Shinya mentioned.

There was a man standing there.

Even though I’m aware that I’m being watched, I still don’t feel his presence. If Shinya hadn’t

mentioned it to me, I wouldn't have noticed at all.

Black hair, cold measured eyes.

In order to avoid his gaze, Guren turned his back toward him and asked.

"…… That's the School President?"

"Yes. Third Year. Hiiragi Kureto. He and Mahiru have been fighting to determine the next head of the Hiiragi House."

"Mm. Is he strong?"

"…… If I fought against him, I would lose."

"Hmph. Then I'm surely stronger."

"Hahaha…… then I hope so too."

Shinya laughed again.

Sure enough, I still don't feel his presence. But I know for sure, he is there. As if he can see through me. As if he can see through my real power.

As if he can see through my motive.

"Then, Guren……"

Shinya said.

"What?"

"You need to beat me up."

"Hm?"

"Because I've been noticed. If you don't want others to suspect that there might be something between us, then you need to seriously hit……"

Before Guren finished, he already aimed his fist at Shinya.

But his action was too dull.

Shinya looked impatiently and caught his fist.

"Too slow, Ichinose trash."

Shinya smiled in return. Guren who had already lost his balance had his face swiftly kicked by Shinya——

"…… Not just a good hit, but a kick too……"

"Aha!"

"Guh!"

Guren let out a groan.

And fell backwards.

The students were all laughing.

As always, it was amusing to them.

The look of a weak, pathetic piece of trash.

However, with this performance,

“…… Can I convince the great School President?”

Guren muttered quietly before falling in the middle of the exercise field.

Volume 2 Chapter 2 – Hiiragi Shinoa

On the way home from school.

“Guren-sama! Guren-sama! Did something happen today!?”

“……”

“Seriously, I’ve been worried every day since coming to this school. I can’t stop worrying about something bad happening to Guren-sama when I’m not around and what would happen if Guren-sama runs into something terrible.”

“……”

“Of course, whether it’s Guren-sama’s power or knowledge, I know worrying about it all is out of my depth, but as Guren-sama’s attendant, I can’t always be around to serve Guren-sama——“

Attendant Hanayori Sayuri was still going on and on about it.

A fifteen-year-old girl wearing a sailor uniform. About 160 centimetres in height. She had brown hair, even though she talked a little bit too much, her face was surprisingly beautiful.

Guren looked at Sayuri and wanted to tell her that she was talking too much, but in the end only let out a sigh.

Suddenly, Sayuri appeared to understand his feelings, her face all flustered.

“S—so, it looks like something terrible happened again when I wasn’t there!”

“Nothing of that sort!”

Guren subconsciously raised his voice.

But Sayuri didn’t stop.

“But, but, just now, you sighed…… You looked really tired and heaved a big sigh!”

“That’s because of your nonstop jabbering!”

“Ehhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!?”

Sayuri raised both her hands and gave a ridiculously loud shout.

Seriously, so noisy.

Then as usual, Sayuri sadly took a few steps back, walking behind with Yukimi Shigure and spoke to her.

“…… Uuuuuuh, Yuki-chan, Guren-sama thinks I talk too much.”

Then Shigure raised her head to look at Sayuri. Her height was under 150 centimetres, Guren knew that she had already stopped growing. The calm and composed girl also wore a sailor uniform.

This time, this girl spoke.

“Aren’t you this noisy every day?”

“Ehhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!?”

“I also think you’re very noisy.”

“Ehhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!?”

“Hey Sayuri, aren’t you enjoying this?”

Sayuri was still holding her hands,

“Eheheh.”

And smiled.

Shigure let out a sigh, and she looked at Guren with her expressionless face.

“But, I feel the same as Sayuri who worries every day. Even though the number of classes have been cut and we’ve been transferred to the class next to yours because of the April attacks, the fact is we still don’t know what happens to Guren-sama in class.”

Sayuri had a look of “yes that’s it!” on her face and nodded.

Shigure continued.

“So, please tell us even just once today. That bruise on your face, who did that to you?”

Hearing that, Guren lightly touched his cheek. Where Shinya had kicked him.

Then,

“It’s nothing. Hiiragi Shinya was just helping me out.”

Upon hearing this, Shigure had a smile on her face that seemed to say “aah so this was what happened!”.

“…… That, Hiiragi scum. I will kill him. Let’s go Sayuri.”

“Yes!”

“Don’t just say yes!”

Guren restrained the pair of them.

Then impatiently told them.

“This. Is. Why. I don’t want to tell you anything.”

“But with Shinya’s strength, even though he was pretending to hurt you, you’re still injured……”

Guren continued his explanation.

“No, it was because someone else was watching so we had no choice.”

“Watching?”

“Mm. Seems like I’ve caught the attention of the School President.”

The two attendants looked at each other, and Sayuri spoke.

“Hiiragi Kureto?”

“You know him?”

This time Shigure answered.

“I only know his name….. Reports on Hiiragi House are very secretive so it was hard to investigate, but since entering this school, I’ve heard his name several times. He and Mahiru are tied for first place in school academic ranking, and he has maintained a high level of performance ever since. In summary, he is tough, smart, cool, and there are rumours that he will be the next head of the Hiiragi House.”

So she said.

“Hm.”

Guren narrowed his eyes.

I recall the Kureto I saw not too long ago. Even though it was only a glance. But, indeed, even he had such a presence. No, you could also say he had no presence at all.

It seems he is quite good at hiding his real power.

Sayuri spoke.

“But, I don’t believe there is anyone in Hiiragi House who could match up to Guren-sama!”

Shigure also agreed.

“Of course.”

Both of them looked serious.

Compared to the people of Japan’s number one and two religious organisations, Guren was better——without any doubt.

No, it should be said that all those who belong to『Mikado no Tsuki』have pinned their hopes and expectations on Guren.

Then,

“…… Hmph.”

Guren could not deny. He had already accepted all of their expectations.

So he just sighed and put on a bored expression.

“…… But, if I can’t even meet your small expectation, then I really have no value in my existence.”

And then laughed.

But Sayuri did not know why,

“…… Ah.”

Her face showing a hint of regret and couldn’t bear to look at Guren.

Guren continued to walk ahead.

At the same time, he was finishing analysing the situation in his mind.

· Regarding the secret war between 《Hyakuya Church》and『Mikado no Oni』.

· Regarding Mahiru betraying the Hiiragi House and joining 《Hyakuya Church》, carrying out weapons research on the banned technique 《Kiju》 to surpass human limitations.

· Also regarding 《Hyakuya Church》, the enemy of 『Mikado no Oni』, but yet the war still has not been disclosed to the public.

"……"

Guren thought of what Mahiru had told him.

『…… Hey Guren, I'll let you in on a secret. 』

When she uttered these words, Saitou, the assassin from《Hyakuya Church》, let out a rare display of anxiety.

Guren still didn't know whether this was a trap, or whether Mahiru really told him a secret that shouldn't have been divulged.

Then, Guren remembered what else Mahiru had said.

『This year at Christmas, the world will experience a disaster.』

Mahiru said these words.

『The horn of the apocalypse will sound and the virus will spread. The world will definitely need more power than what it has now. That way, you will be sure…… you will be sure to need me. Until that time comes, farewell. 』

Guren didn't understand what she really meant by this.

Of course, the words themselves are understandable.

——Spread of the virus, destruction of the world.

Actually, it is very simple.

But,

"Because of the virus, the world will be destroyed? Does it mean 《Hyakuya Church》 will carry out a virus attack?"

But, I can't understand why 《Hyakuya Church》 *would want to do this.* 《Hyakuya Church》 *is already the country's biggest religious organisation. They have a lot of power in matters of the country, you could even say that right now in this world——*《Hyakuya Church》*wanted to destroy the political system.*

Even if only《Hyakuya Church》*has the vaccine, taking advantage of this to spread the virus around the world——to think that someone with such ambitions exist,*

“Control the world? What a foolish dream, can it even really happen?”

But that was what Mahiru said.

With a sincere expression as well.

The world will be destroyed because of this virus.

And it will be on this Christmas day.

Now it’s already June, there are only six more months till the destruction of the world.

“……”

Also, the phrase ‘horn of the apocalypse’ is from the famous religious text 《Revelations》*, the horn of destruction will be sounded by* 《Seven Angels》*, or perhaps alluding to something similar, I can’t be sure.*

War.

Virus.

Christmas.

“If the world only has six more months left, then it is really too calm now.”

Guren thought about these uncertain words and smiled as he looked up towards the sky.

It was almost the rainy season, but it still hasn’t rained.

It was so clear that it was unnerving.

Guren stared at the sky,

“…… Rather than attacking after the enemy has struck, would it be better to discuss matters with《Hyakuya Church》……?”

He muttered quietly.

Even if I didn’t contact 《Hyakuya Church》*, the Hiiragi House has also suspected that I’m the traitor.*

But this also works.

Even if it wasn’t me.

Mahiru had betrayed the Hiiragi House, and 《Hyakuya Church》 *also contacted me.*

So it can be said that in this war of intelligence, the rival is the Hiiragi House.

But, the Hiiragi House aren’t idiots as well. If we waste our time, they will be sure to catch up. Then it will be certain that they will go all out against the 《Hyakuya Church》.

First of all, the Ichinose House needs to decide on their position for self-preservation.

Guren thought about what Saitou, the 《Hyakuya Church》 assassin, had said.

In the future, if I want to get in touch with 《Hyakuya Church》*, I have to go to Hyakuya Orphanage to initiate contact.*

"…… Even if I want to go, I have to make sure that I go before I get noticed."

Guren muttered.

Then at this time,

"Eh? What did you say just now?"

Almost as if she had heard his words, Sayuri raised her head and asked.

Guren looked down at her,

"Nothing. Aren't you two going to the supermarket?"

"Yes. We have already used up all the groceries last night. It has been three days since we last bought anything."

"Then you two go ahead. I'll head back home first."

Shigure tried to read Guren's expression,

"We can both go but…… Are you thinking of something else?"

Guren couldn't help but smile.

Because the things he was thinking about, he had no idea how to deal with them. Guren nodded his head,

"We'll talk later when you get back."

"But……"

Guren interrupted Shigure.

"Your power is just in the way now that we're being monitored."

"……"

Hearing what Guren had just said, Shigure and Sayuri both felt uneasy about it.

Guren continued.

"I'm going to gather intelligence. When I return, I'll assign you both tasks. We each have our own thing to do, so as to minimise any mistakes as a team."

With that, both went quiet. Even though they were usually noisy, as attendants to the Ichinose House, they were both outstanding.

Then, finally,

"Ah, just one more thing, Guren-sama."

"What is it?"

"What would you like for dinner……"

Guren gave his usual answer.

“Curry.”

Sayuri frowned,

“Seriously, Guren-sama, you always give the same answer.”

Shigure gave a wry smile,

“I know you don’t want to put in too much effort on this silly thing, but……”

Though Shigure hadn’t finished, Guren laughed,

“But I just like curry?”

“Seriously~”

Sayuri couldn’t help but smile.

“I understand. Leave tonight’s dinner to us then!”

“Alright, thank you. Your cooking is extremely delicious, I always enjoy it.”

Being praised on their culinary skills, their eyes lit up and cheeks blushed red.

Then,

“It turns out that even without thinking, the choice will always be curry~”

Sayuri pursed her mouth and said.

Guren smiled and deftly avoided the topic, taking the opportunity to leave the two.

And he walks towards the high rise apartment in which the Ichinose House has rented out the upper floor.

Guren clearly noticed that the people monitoring them have separated.

And it was obvious that one was an unskilled watcher while the other he just noticed the breath of a highly skilled hidden watcher.

It should be that Sayuri and Shigure have also noticed them.

“Hoh hoh, it seems that before I wasn’t worth caring about, now it’s like I’ve become some big shot.”

Guren secretly laughed to himself.

Now it’s actually quite easy to shake these people off. I bet the one who ordered this was Hiiragi Kureto.

So, the time to act,

“Is now.”

Guren calmly continued walking.

He walked towards the road of shops at the side and entered a small games arcade. He then greeted the shop staff and said he needed to use the toilet. In the games arcade, there was a toilet in the staff only area, and next to the toilet was a back door.

The Ichinose House had long already developed a backup route in case they were monitored.

Guren slipped out the back door.

And just like that, the feeling of being watched disappeared.

But just in case, Guren went another way to make sure that he had really lost the person tailing him.

Guren then returned to the supermarket where Shigure and Sayuri had went.

《Hyakuya Orphanage》 and the apartments where Guren was staying at should just be across the road from the supermarket.

Where they kill the parents of the children with special talents and put them in the orphanage to be experimented on——these are the rumours of this place.

"……"

Guren went through the small alley behind the supermarket.

Sure enough, there was no sign of being followed.

After making sure, Guren went back onto the main street. This street was nothing special, 《Hyakuya Orphanage》 should be on this residential street, an ordinary looking orphanage.

However, on the way to the orphanage.

Sandwiched between the houses in the middle of a road stood a cute girl.

Age was about seven or eight.

It was clearly a child, watching the world with such wide eyes. With snow white skin that almost looked transparent.

But the most surprising thing was that it was the same as Mahiru——the same grey hair.

The girl watched him closely.

"……"

Guren stopped, looked in her direction, and gave a gentle smile and said.

"Eh, so what is it? Do you want to tell me something?"

Then the girl answered.

"…… Are you Ichinose Guren?"

"And you are? Ah, can it be that you're related to Mahiru-sama?"

Hearing this, the girl touched her head and said.

“Ah, is it obvious? The hair colour is similar eh.”

Then she gave an unchildlike smile. She bowed her head and introduced herself.

“I’m Hiiragi Shinoa. Mahiru’s younger sister.”

Mahiru’s younger sister.

Guren nodded his head and replied.

“Ah, so it is. Then, Mahiru-sama’s little sister, what do you want with me?”

“Big sister wanted me to pass you a message.”

That was what she said. *It seems that she’s Mahiru’s messenger. So if it turns out that this brat is telling the truth.*

Guren gave a small smile and said.

“Mahiru-sama’s message? So what did she want……”

The girl called Shinoa calmly interrupted him.

“Ah ah, quick get rid of that smile that grosses people out. I’ve already been warned by big sister that you’re that type of person.”

“Eh? What are you talking about…….”

“You still won’t believe me no matter what I say, so I shall tell you a little about what I know. 《Hyakuya Church》 . 《Kiju》 weapon. Mahiru betrayed Hiiragi House secrets for the man she loves. How’s that?”

It’s true, only Mahiru knows all this information. No, if this information had been leaked, if the person in front of me isn’t Mahiru’s sister, then my own ambitions will have also been exposed.

So Guren returned a smile,

“Alright. And so? What did you want with me, brat?”

Then, Shinoa gave a happy smile.

“Ahaha. Your expression has changed. But it has more of a charm.”

“I’m not too happy that a kid’s just complimented me.”

“Really? I’ve always wanted to see what kind of person who my sister just can’t stop dreaming about. But fortunately, you’re not boring, so that’s good.”

Shinoa said so.

Her big sister’s obsession of the person she keeps dreaming about.

Mahiru’s real intentions of running away in the end and helping the enemy’s research into the 《Kiju》 *weapons.*

But how on earth would this brat know about Mahiru’s intentions?

“Whose side are you on?”

Hiiragi House?

Or 《Hyakuya Church》*?*

Shinoa replied.

“The interesting side.”

“Ah?”

“To be honest, I’m just a kid. I have absolutely no interest in rights or power. And I’m very lucky to have such a good big sister and I’ve never been expected to become the next head……”

“……”

“All those stuff only concerns Kureto and big sister…… But, in order to prevent the both of them from dying——only because of this reason, I’ve started training later on. But, even though I’m just a kid, I still have a bit of talent. My power can barely make it.”

Once she finished speaking, she made her move.

Suddenly, from out of nowhere, she was holding a talisman on her right hand.

She’s fast.

A murderous aura radiated from her small body.

It’s hard to imagine that this is coming from a small child.

Is she a genius?——it seems like she’s one. After all, her talent could be because she has the Hiiragi blood, or even that she is Mahiru’s younger sister.

But, Guren did not react in any way. Only narrowed his eyes and stared at her.

So Shinoa stopped and gave a smile.

“Ah you see. I could have killed you just now…… but you didn’t move an inch.”

Guren opened his mouth.

“Your level of skill can’t hurt me at all.”

“I know.”

“So? What on earth are you doing?”

The talisman that Shinoa was holding onto disappeared. She said.

“As I said, I’m only proving which side I’m on. I have no interest in the Hiiragi House. I also have no interest in the 《Hyakuya Church》. But…… I like my big sister. She’s very kind to me, everything she tells me is very interesting.”

“So, I should tell you that I believe your every word?”

Shinoa shook her head.

“I’m only here to pass a message.”

“What message?”

“Please don’t go to 《Hyakuya Orphanage》. Big sister also plans to betray 《Hyakuya Church》.”

“……”

“The fact that big sister likes you so much to disclose such information, that’s really shocked me.”

Shinoa laughed frivolously.

“It’s the first time I’ve seen such desperate, senseless behaviour from big sister.”

“……”

“This so-called love can make people do such impulsive things. For a kid like me, I completely cannot understand it.”

Guren stared at Shinoa and spoke.

“….. I also don’t understand it.”

“Ah, really?”

“Yes.”

“That’s a pity. It’s going to make big sister cry.”

Shinoa laughed.

Guren then said.

“Oi, Shinoa.”

There was surprise in the girl’s eyes, as she looked at Guren,

“I know I’m younger than you, so you can call me by my first name…… What’s wrong, Guren?”

Shinoa also used his first name.

Guren ended up smiling and said.

“What else is Mahiru shouldering all by herself? What is she planning to do?”

Shinoa’s lips curved a little.

“Ah, if you don’t love her, why do you care?”

“Never mind, just answer me.”

Shinoa tilted her head and replied.

“Who knows? Because big sister is so smart, her plans are so complicated so I don’t know.”

“Then just tell me all that you know.”

“No no, I only know about your relationship with my sister, that you don’t want to be in the way, so you haven’t stopped gaining power.”

“……”

“But my sister also told me that you’ve tried very hard. ‘Guren also wants to be with me.’ Although the paths taken are different, the destination is the same. When she told me this, she had the look of girl who’s completely immersed in her dream.”

So Shinoa had said.

The same destination.

In Guren’s mind flashed a few words.

Virus.

Christmas.

Destruction.

“…… So that’s all you know?”

Hearing Guren’s question, Shinoa nodded.

“Yup.”

“Then, can you help me pass a message to Mahiru?”

Shinoa laughed again.

“Aha, you want me to pass on a message of love?”

Guren said.

“Tell her, ‘what I hate the most is being controlled by others.’ Tell her, ‘If you still love me, then tell me the whole plan, you idiot.’”

“Ooh, you sure you want me to say it word for word?”

“Aaah, that’s right.”

“Yuuuuuuuup~ Turns out I really can’t understand love between adults. Don’t you think it’s very twisted?”

Shinoa crossed her arms and cocked her head.

Then, a group of young children about the same age as Shinoa could be heard from behind her.

“Akane-chan, let’s race to see who gets to the park first!”

“Eh~ how can we all beat Mika?”

Was everyone’s reply.

Guren turned his head towards that direction.

There were a few kids over there. But there was one that caught Guren’s attention.

Golden hair, with skin fairer than Shinoa, a young boy with mixed foreign blood perhaps.

That kid should be the same one that 《Hyakuya Church》*assassin——Saitou brought from* 《Hyakuya Orphanage》*.*

I remember the name was something like, Mikaela.

Guren looked at the boy, and almost as if he had immediately noticed Guren’s presence, he looked back.

“Ah, this isn’t good.”

The girl beside him asked.

“What is it?”

“That big brother with the evil looking eyes, I’ve seen him before. Saitou-san said he was a pervert!”

“Eh!?”

Hearing those kinds of words, Shinoa immediately spat out laughing.

Mikaela ran over to Shinoa to check on her.

“Hang on, are you alright?”

Shinoa turned around and spoke as though she was terribly enjoying herself.

“No, I am not alright at all~ ♪ This pervert came to attack me, now no one is safe~!”

“So that’s it!”

That’s not how it is! Guren argued in his head before turning around.

“So that’s it. I’m leaving the message to you.”

Mikaela answered before Shinoa could.

“Ah, don’t run! I’ll go call the police!”

“Ah~ yes yes!”

“Don’t hang around here next time……”

“So annoying, you brat. I’m going to leave now, so you better just shut your mouth.”

Shinoa couldn’t help herself,

“Ahaha.”

Hearing her laugh again, Guren ignored it and turned around.

If what Shinoa said is true, then no one must know what Mahiru’s sister and I talked about, not even 《Hyakuya Church》 *or the Hiiragi House.*

Of course, I can’t just believe it completely.

“….. Still going to betray 《Hyakuya Church》? The destruction of the world? Reaching the same destination, eh?”

Guren muttered softly to himself.

“What is this~? Some kind of heroic love story? Really, Mahiru?”

Guren called out his past——his childhood love’s name, and let out a defeated sigh.

Volume 2 Chapter 3 – The Student Council President's Summon

Three days later, at school.

In those three short days, the rainy season had started, but the rain had been pouring nonstop since this morning.

Inside the classroom, at the seat next to the window, Guren had been staring at the muddy exercise field in the midst of the rain.

On the podium, the homeroom teacher Aiuchi Saia addressed the students.

"Oh, as everyone is aware, because of the attack in April, we have lost half of our companions, comrades, future elites of the『Mikado no Oni』. Let's have a moment of silence now for those students who had lost their lives."

Everyone closed their eyes.

Except only Guren kept his opened.

The Hiiragi House teachers' real motive of having a minute of silence might be to unite all the students in solidarity, so it was done every day.

Guren's lip curled up slightly as his cold eyes looked at this obvious selfish display, then with nothing else to do, he looked out the window again.

Once the silence had ended, the homeroom teacher continued.

“Alright, there is something important I want to tell everyone today. Because of the attack, the extremely important examination which was meant to test everyone’s strengths and abilities was interrupted.”

At the exercise field, there were still people training despite the rain. No, because it was raining, it was possible to unleash their full strength on the muddy grounds.

The female wearing the sailor outfit was hit by her male opponent, tumbling onto the muddy ground.

The teacher still went on.

“So for the time being, in order to evaluate the abilities of the students who have not been tested, there will be an examination held today.”

Hearing this, Guren looked at the teacher for the first time.

Suddenly, everyone in class let out a “eh”, followed by sounds of murmurs at the mention of the surprise examination.

But, the teacher smiled.

“Having said that, most of the students in this class have already been evaluated, so everyone can rest easy. Those who haven’t been tested are…… Needless to say it must be Class A’s Hiiragi Shinya-sama and——“

With these words, Guren looked at Shinya who was seated beside him.

Shinya looked at him and gave him a smile.

The teacher continued talking.

“And, the talented daughter of the Juujou house, Mito-san, and Norito-san from the Goshi House.”

The names of the three most powerful students in class were called. It appeared that the second half of the initial selection examinations was to be conducted between the strongest students.

Anyway, at this time,

“…… Will they also call me?”

Hearing Guren’s murmuring, Shinya also in a soft voice,

“Mm, yes. The investigation that we talked about last time has already started.”

And replied.

At the same time, the teacher also said.

“….. Lastly, the one with the lowest evaluation, the trash from Ichinose House, these four are called. So please assemble at the gym at the specified time. Juujou Mito-san, Goshi Norito-san, you two will be at 8:30. Hiiragi Shinya-sama and Ichinose Guren’s time is 9

o’clock——“

Then, it can be seen that Mito turned her heard towards Guren’s direction.

And Guren just happened to meet her gaze,

“Unf!”

Mito bitterly turned back. She was still angry about what happened last time. Of course, that was expected. Guren expected this to happen, that was why he did it.

Then Goshi who noticed the little spark between them looked at Guren,

“We have to be re-assessed. Good luck alright!”

Unfortunately, Guren ignored it.

Then the other students,

“Oi, you dare ignore Goshi-sama’s words, you sure have guts!”

But the student who abused Guren was stopped by Goshi himself.

“Ah, it’s alright. He’s just like this.”

“What trash are you talking about?”

“Eh?”

“A piece of trash that Goshi-sama actually spoke with should be thankful about it, you’re really ungrateful.”

Ah, it’s the same routine words again.

Guren continued to ignore them, and stared at the clock above the blackboard.

Then,

“…… The selection exams eh. Can’t I just hide from it?”

And muttered to himself.

◆

The gym was across the building with the classrooms, with the exercise field in the middle of the two buildings.

At Shibuya First High School, only sorcery and incantation skills were important, so there weren’t any other activities at school.

So the gym was mainly equipped with sorcery training equipment, mostly to be used in groups.

At this time, there were only a few people, so Guren opened the doors to the gym.

The time was 9:05.

“You’re late, Ichinose Guren.”

A bright but cold voice blamed him.

The voice was coming from the middle of the gym.

Guren looked at the source of the voice.

There were already a few students standing there.

There were three familiar faces among them.

Mito, Goshi.

And Shinya.

Mito and Goshi both were slumped on the ground, looking exhausted. It looked like their fight was over and their assessment completed.

From Guren's perspective, it looked like Mito was the stronger one, but he was not interested in who won.

Instead, what he was more interested in was,

"……"

Guren looked towards the person standing in the middle whose face was completely void of emotion, it was a completely cold, rational look coming from a male student.

The same one I managed to glance at, the one standing at the window.

Hiiragi Kureto——Student Council President.

It is said that his power is comparable to Mahiru's, that since entering this school, he has always maintained the position of Student Council President.

Guren avoided this person's attention,

"Ah, ah, sorry…… Actually, I had diarrhoea, so had to rush to the toilet."

And said.

Shinya laughed at this response.

"Scared of this surprise exam to this extent? How weak."

Mito said.

"You're so timid and yet you still came to this school, that's a real problem."

Lastly, Goshi said,

"Alright, alright, I understand. When I was informed that I was going to fight this manly woman, I was also really nervous……"

"Who do you mean by manly woman!?"

"Eh, you mean I'm wrong?"

The two of them continued to argue.

It was as Guren expected, Mito had won.

Guren looked around him and then,

“Ah, so, what do I have to do……”

Hiiragi Kureto answered.

“Come in.”

“Ah, yes.”

Guren lowered his head and obediently entered the gym.

Guren, like a small cat, walked right up to Shinya and stood next to him. Then he raised his head and met the eyes of the male student.

Sure enough, a powerful aura.

Deep black eyes with a strong will, neat black hair. On his waist was a Japanese sword, he wore a Student Council armband on his sleeve.

Seamless.

But, there is no pressure.

Just a set of cold eyes watching intently,

“Oi, Ichinose Guren.”

And Guren’s name was called.

Guren immediately replied.

“Yes.”

“I’m asking you. Answer me honestly. Did you betray information to the ones behind the April attacks, the 《Hyakuya Church》?”

That question was really straight to the point.

Mito and Goshi widened their eyes, shocked looks on their faces.

Even Shinya had a tentative look of surprise.

Guren feigned surprise and answered.

“Eh, what….. What are you talking about?”

“So it wasn’t you?”

“No, not me.”

“Really?”

“Really. I’m quite worthless at this school, so how could I possibly get useful information to betray……”

Kureto interrupted him.

“That, I believe. The teachers and students here are all stupid, but not as stupid as to pass you any information. But, even if you did not betray any information, you still contacted 《Hyakuya Church》. Am I right?”

“Never……”

“That, I don’t believe. You have a motive. You hate the Hiiragi House and perhaps you’ve figured out the benefits of joining forces with 《Hyakuya Church》. The evidence is the fact that you’re still pretending to be a fool in order to hide your true power.”

Kureto said that all at once. *It seems that he was never planning on letting me explain myself. And he also doesn’t believe me at all, so he has just exposed everything he knew about the situation.*

Even so, Guren said,

“That’s really very flattering…..”

Kureto ignored his words.

“A person with no strength could not have possibly survived the attack. So that’s why I believe you’re hiding your true strength.”

Hearing this, Mito looked towards Guren.

“Eh, hold on, that……”

But Kureto simply continued.

“However, this strength is still not enough to defeat our Hiiragi House. So let’s test it out right now then.”

“Hah? Please wait a minute…..”

Ignoring Guren’s words, Kureto ordered Shinya.

“Shinya, kill him. This way we will reveal his true strength.”

“Ah? Why is it me…..”

“You wish to defy me? Don’t tell me you’re working with him?”

Faced with this question, Shinya had a pained expression.

“Ehhh~ how troublesome! This unwarranted suspicion, I really don’t like it ah, Kureto nii-san.”

Kureto replied with no expression.

“If you don’t want me to suspect you, then you better make a move. Make him reveal his strength.”

“Yup~ Looks like I don’t have a choice. Hey, Guren.”

Shinya looked at Guren.

“Sorry about this, looks like I have to go up against you. This is big brother’s order!”

Shinya raised his fist. Guren knew that his fists have quickened because of a curse.

Guren pretended,

“…… Eh.”

To not react in time.

But, if unprepared for such a punch, even if I don’t die, I’m sure to end up in hospital.

But if the world is going to end in six months, then it doesn’t seem too bad to end up in hospital at this time.

If I continue to hide my strength, I don’t even know whether there will be a day I will be able to fight against the Hiiragi House.

Guren must be able to predict the outcome, but this plan had no sure outcome, so he reached a conclusion.

Guren chose to be beaten.

Shinya could be considered an accomplice.

Hopefully, he would have taken into consideration the position of the first hit.

Recovery time would be one month.

I could also have a legitimate reason to not attend school, so this could actually be a good idea.

So,

“……”

Guren didn’t move.

Shinya’s fist was closing in.

It was aimed at Guren’s chest.

But Shinya fist suddenly stopped.

Kureto intercepted the attack with his hand, stopping Shinya.

Kureto opened his mouth.

“Oi you. Why did you purposely go easy?”

He said as he fiercely grabbed Shinya’s arm.

“Guuh!”

Shinya’s face was twisted in pain. Kureto had punched Shinya right in the teeth.

The punch had caused Shinya to fall all the way at the back.

That move was decisive and fast, just from this, it is obvious that Kureto's power is not normal.

Kureto spoke to Shinya who was unable to get up.

"This is your first punishment for your behaviour just now. Your credibility is falling. At the same time, I'm going to investigate whether you are colluding with 《Hyakuya Church》 as well."

Shinya was still unable to get up.

Mito and Goshi were also scared frozen in place.

Then Kureto turned to face Guren. His lips formed a smile for the first time.

"Alright, Guren. Your turn."

"Ah."

"Stop pretending. If you are really powerless, then you can die right here. If you do have power, I'm going to beat you up until you confess, about whether you got in touch with《Hyakuya Church》."

Kureto then unsheathed his sword from his waist. *Looks like this is the real deal.*

But Guren still spoke.

"Please think about this. If you were to kill me, then the relationship between Hiiragi House and Ichinose House……"

"The lowly Ichinose House, this will be one way to get them to shut up."

Ah, so it is, Guren silently contemplated. But still he wasn't going to give up.

"You're, you're really overestimating me. I really don't have any power……"

Suddenly, a voice from somewhere echoed.

It was Mito.

"It's true, Kureto-sama! I've provoked him several times, this boy called Guren doesn't have a shred of power in him!"

Kureto narrowed his eyes at Mito and said,

"….. Juujou House, are you also a traitor?"

In a quiet voice.

Mito didn't seem to realise and continued.

"And so……"

Kureto interrupted her words.

“Are you trying to persuade me to stop? Then, to say these words to me, who do you think you are? What is your relationship with Ichinose Guren, Juujou Mito? Are you his lover or something else?”

Mito immediately panicked.

“Eh, no, how could…..”

“Then what is it?”

“He, he’s just a fellow classmate….. Besides, Ichi—Ichinose trash, to trouble Kureto-sama into making a move, that is, that is really……”

Mito didn’t know what else to say, so her voice died down.

To be honest, for Mito to talk back at this time, Guren was really shocked. *It seems that her sense of justice can’t allow this situation to happen.*

However, her sense of justice, where on earth does it come from? Is it because she can’t bear to see a fellow student get killed?

Guren didn’t understand.

But Guren did feel that this situation was increasingly getting troublesome.

If this continues, then Mito would be under suspicion too, though it’s not because of this reason, but how I feel——no matter how I put it, now the situation has become——

“….. Unescapable.”

Guren muttered.

He looked up at the roof of the gym.

There, Kureto had already raised his sword.

“Alright. Everyone else keep quiet. Ichinose Guren. You die now.”

“How, how can this!”

Mito yelled out.

Also, Goshi,

“Damn, the worst possible situation.”

Couldn’t help but groan.

Even though it has only been three months, but to spend every day in the same class, this is perhaps a normal reaction to seeing a fellow classmate getting killed.

Basically, these guys are alright.

And now, Guren was facing an unavoidable death.

On this point, Mito and Goshi were convinced.

This school's highest achiever, focussed on the results, the crown of the Hiiragi House, this monster has raised his sword with the intent to kill.

It looked like no doubt the trash Guren was going to die.

If he was really useless, then these were only fool's words.

"…… Aah, this is so troublesome."

Guren muttered loudly.

Then he looked back at the ceiling.

Kureto was closing in.

His speed was incredibly fast.

No doubt coming from the school's NO. 1 Student Council President.

But still,

"…… Not as fast as the demon possessed Mahiru eh."

Guren also pulled out his sword from his waist.

This was a new sword. It replaced Kujakumaru which had been broken by Mahiru, and Guren had specifically gotten it sent from home. Demon sword——Miru.*

Guren used his sword to block Kureto's sword, a "ding" sound could be heard as the metal clashed against each other.

Kureto quickly turned around and attacked again one after another.

But Guren was avoiding all the attacks, the scary thing was that his attack was better than Kureto.

"Hm."

Kureto took a side step then a step back. At the same time, he threw out a talisman.

Guren cut down the talisman in half and went straight towards Kureto's chest.

Kureto raised his sword to defend himself. But Guren didn't stop. His left hand loosened its grip on the handle and went straight towards Kureto's face.

Kureto took a step back, barely avoiding the attack. He aimed a kick at Guren's hand that was holding the sword.

Guren took the blow with his elbow, then aimed his sword at Kureto's legs but missed.

Kureto took a few steps back and repositioned himself.

Guren also took a step back and adjusted his stance.

"……"

All this happened in an instant.

Only Shinya could see every move clearly.

Mito and Goshi still had no idea what was going on.

And in the end, everything was now exposed.

Mito spoke.

"…… I, I was saying, what on earth….."

Kureto interrupted her and spoke.

"……Ha. You've finally revealed your true colours, the next head of the Ichinose House."

Guren forced a smile and said.

"…… Ah I don't deserve such words. I didn't reveal my true colours. I only felt bad so I didn't reveal it."

"Haha."

"…… What's more, this ability isn't really a threat is it? Even if I am just a little bit stronger…… so what? I just don't want to be monitored by the Hiiragi House."

Kureto still looked on with cold eyes, pointing his sword at Guren again.

"Whether or not you're a threat, we'll find out in the next round."

"Ah really, you can't let me go?"

"No. Let's settle this once and for all, who's the strongest in this school."

Guren didn't have the patience to listen to his words and scrunched his face.

"You're a really fucking annoying bastard!"

"Ha, haha, so this is how you really speak. But honestly, it's rare for me to meet an evenly-matched opponent. Who would have thought that the branch house would produce such a talented brat——don't disappoint me."

Then Kureto raised his sword again.

And Guren immediately reacted.

Who is stronger?

Guren was interested. *But, even if I win, it's meaningless. I have a little power, but it isn't enough to beat Kureto.*

I didn't have the guts to betray the Hiiragi House. It's only because I didn't want to catch the attention of the Hiiragi House, that's why I've been hiding my strength. But, if I want to pretend to be weaker than Kureto, then Ichinose Guren will need to revert back to the Ichinose trash——

This is the best move.

However,

“Ah, ah, you can’t do this…..”

Guren moaned.

He looked up and saw Kureto’s powerful sword.

But, Kureto was just bluffing him just now.

In that moment of looking up, Guren was not prepared to be suddenly surrounded by murderous aura all over.

There are five people in the gym. I’m surrounded by enemies. Ah, no, you could say that everyone in this school is my enemy, so I guess this can’t be helped.

Attacks came from all five sides. But the attack couldn’t be detected. A small needle-like

weapon came flying past.

Guren looked at the direction of the murderous aura,

“Shit.”

Even though Guren tried to defend himself, because it was so sudden, he only managed to hit three of the needles.

The other two landed on his right ankle and his back.

It’s not coated with poison, probably anaesthetic.

Instantly, Guren realised it was the latter. A strong sense of weariness hit him.

“…… Ah~ seriously, you’re such an annoying guy. Didn’t you say you wanted to prove who was stronger?”

Guren said as he narrowed his eyes and looked at the man. Kureto looked at Guren as though he was such a stupid fool and said.

“…… Eh? A guy that’s still interested in such a childish things exists?”

“……”

“You’re also not interested, right? Since you were going to lose on purpose, am I right?”

“……”

“Anyway, I’m already aware of your true power. Looks like you can be quite useful. I’m going to investigate whether you’re involved with 《Hyakuya Church》. If you’re really innocent, I’m going to make you an important chess piece that belongs to the Hiiragi House and make good use of you.”

“……”

“When you wake up, I’m going to use truth serum on you and torture you. But first, have a good sleep, Ichinose Guren.”

Only after hearing all this,

“Bastard……”

Guren’s consciousness was cut off.

*The literal translation of the kanji 觀流 is “View Flow” (sort of??). The furigana is ミル (Miru).

Volume 2 Chapter 4 – Torture and Revelation

Unconscious.

Conscious.

Unconscious.

Conscious.

This pattern, how long has it been going on for?

"……"

Guren once again woke up, slightly opened his eyes.

His vision was distorted.

Probably the truth serum.

But he had received training on resisting poisons, drugs, and torture.

Guren examined his situation.

It was an extremely bright room.

The chair was fixed to the floor.

Guren was tied to the chair, enduring constant questioning.

"Are you working with《Hyakuya Church》?"

The one responsible for the torture was a man dressed in army uniform from the『Mikado no Oni』. Guren couldn't see his face clearly. He was shining a bright light against Guren, the glare from the light made him dizzy.

Looks like this situation has been going on for about three days. Once unconscious, Guren was woken up immediately as he was not allowed to sleep. So his mind wasn't able to think clearly because of the fatigue.

Even the effort to lie was fast fading.

The man opened his mouth again.

"Are you working with《Hyakuya Church》?"

Now is about the time to respond.

This kind of torture, even for someone who had received training would also start to talk.

So Guren estimated that this was the time to start his lie.

"…… Uhh, ahh….."

"What? So now you wish to talk?"

"…… Water, give me water……"

"Water? Answer my question then I will let you drink water."

"Ah……"

"Are you working with《Hyakuya Church》?"

"…… Hya, Hyaku?"

"《Hyakuya Church》. Are you their ally?"

Faced with this question, Guren thought about his answer before giving it.

“…… No, not an ally.”

“Liar. You are with the 《Hyakuya Church》.”

“No……”

“You are with the 《Hyakuya Church》.”

“Uh, uh uh, I…… was solicited by them.”

“Solicited? So you have joined the 《Hyakuya Church》?”

“No, not that. Powerful, no……”

“Powerful what?”

The man continued to ask,

“Ah ah, looks like you can’t answer questions that are too complicated. But, I understand now. This is your secret. You’ve been solicited by 《Hyakuya Church》. So do you know why they attacked the school?”

“No, I don’t……”

“Liar. You do.”

“……”

Guren kept quietly. He thought about it carefully. *This is the crux of the interrogation. If I answer well, then the interrogator will be satisfied, and let me go.*

I just need to give him, give him a credible answer.

The man spoke.

“You know because it was you who let them into the school.”

“No.”

“You know.”

“Uh…… ah, wa—war……”

“War?”

“I know, there will be war…… but as for when……”

“You don’t know?”

The man continued to probe him.

Guren replied.

“Those people, said they want, us Ichinose House, to submit, they…… also said, that an organisation of our size, whether or not, it’s still the same……”

“…… Oh?”

“So…… I didn’t get the information.”

“So you joined 《Hyakuya Church》?”

“No.”

“No, you betrayed the Hiiragi House.”

Guren suddenly looked up and smiled.

“Ha, ahaha, hahahahahaha!”

“What? Why are you laughing? Are you admitting your guilt?”

Guren replied.

“Why do I, need to betray the Hiiragi House? Being slaves to 《Hyakuya Church》 and being the branch house trash….. isn’t that the same thing?”

“……”

“Enough already. Just kill me. I’m tried. Why don’t you two big organisations just go and enjoy fighting each other?”

“……”

“After all, we are trash. Oh great Hiiragi House, why do you care so much about this trash?”

Suddenly, the light turned off.

The room darkened. The pupils couldn’t open in time so the eyes had to take a while to adjust.

The scene in front of him changes from white to black, the outline of the room was slowly emerging.

The interrogator was a fierce looking middle-aged man with a moustache. He turned his head,

“There are still others……”

This time, the door of the room opened.

Kureto was standing at the door. He looked to the side,

“Still can’t get an answer?”

“Yes. It seems he has received some training in resisting interrogations. Even so, there are still limits to what humans can endure. And I believe he is reaching that limit.”

“So? Has he told the truth?”

The man with the moustache nodded his head.

“Yes. At least I believe he has told the truth.”

Kureto stared at Guren with his cold deathly eyes.

“What did he say? Then, is this everything you know?”

“……”

Guren raised his head.

“Did I tell you that you’re too flattering?”

“If this is really the case, then you’re a big disappointment.”

“Ha, whatever suits you.”

Kureto’s gaze was still looking at Guren’s body and said.

“….. Your father has protested. He wants us to release you.”

“……”

“So we have interrogated him as well. He has said the same thing as you. The Ichinose House had been solicited by 《Hyakuya Church》——but both parties have not agreed on the conditions, while waiting for a response, the war already broke out.”

“……”

“Your father is really weak, eh? He succumbed five hours earlier than you. Even his heart stopped beating at the end.”

“…… tch.”

A hint of a sneer on Kureto’s face.

“Oh, this is the first time you’ve showed your true emotions, eh? You’re angry. So that also means that all along, you’ve just be acting. Even during interrogation, you only showed what you want to show to the other side. That’s incredible. I’m praising you now eh. Such outstanding talent born from the lowly branch house.”

“……”

“Ah, don’t worry. Your father isn’t dead. We resuscitated him and let him go. Even though you’re really strong, but as you say, even if someone is very strong, it still doesn’t change anything. You don’t even deserve to touch our shoes, vile Ichinose House. You will never be a threat to the Hiiragi House. Of this, I’m very certain.”

“……”

He’s right.

Kureto continued.

“…… But, I appreciate your efforts, Ichinose Guren. Work under me. Then the status of the branch house can also rise a little, eh?”

“ ….. If I refuse?”

Kureto tilted his head and thought about it before speaking.

“…… Then I will destroy the Ichinose House. According to my calculations, I will only need five days to kill everyone in the 『Mikado no Tsuki』.”

“……”

“Your organisation’s strength is only this much. In fact, 《Hyakuya Church》 didn’t even pay too much attention to you. And the only reason why the Hiiragi House is allowed you to exist is simply because you have no power, you’re just a weak group.”

“……”

“But, I think you have talent. Alright, so choose now. Are you going to let Ichinose House get destroyed, or……”

“…… Swear allegiance to you?”

“Exactly.”

“So proud.”

Kureto’s face naturally just nodded,

“This is the Hiiragi House for you.”

And said.

Looks like I don’t have a choice.

But I still can accept this proposal from Kureto. Originally, I wanted to hide my power and play the fool at school. But if I can be by Kureto’s side, that’s not bad as well.

But once I give in to Kureto, I have to obey him.

I need to admit that I can’t beat Kureto and I’m not match for the Hiiragi House, so I’ll become their lackey instead.

Yes, as long as the Hiiragi House believes this, then it will be easy enough.

The only problem is whether I’ll be able to let go of the Hiiragi’s grasp eventually.

Guren raised his head to look at Kureto and said.

“….. Whatever it is, give me some water first.”

Kureto smiled and said.

“So you agree?”

“Is there even another option?”

“Is there? Next time you’ll be my comrade. Don’t worry. I don’t humiliate my subordinates.”

“Subordinate eh?”

“Not satisfied? Then, you want to be called friend?”

Guren thought what Kureto had said was odd.

“Ah?”

Kureto ignored him and ordered the interrogator.

“Untie him. From today onwards, he is my subordinate……”

But Guren had already loosened the ropes himself and freed his wrists. He could have released himself any time he wanted to.

“This……”

The interrogator looked shock as he faced Guren.

Watching the interrogator, Guren smiled,

“Ah, don’t worry. I accepted the torture voluntarily. I won’t hold it against you.”

Kureto looked calm. He looked like he wanted to say something as he looked on at Guren,

“You look a little haggard. Let’s call it a day. Tomorrow, I will give you a job to do.”

“So I already have to listen to the master eh?”

“Hm? What are you saying? Hasn’t it always been like this? From the start until eternity…… even your children will forever be under the Hiiragi House. Oh yes, your weapons, I’ve already let your father return home. Tomorrow I’ll pass you a weapon that will match your power, a more powerful weapon.”

Saying that, Kureto turned around and left the room.

Guren watched Kureto’s back as he left. Then the interrogator suddenly had a change of attitude and bowed.

And,

“…… I deeply apologise for earlier, Ichinose Guren-sama.”

He respectfully said.

Now that I’ve become Kureto’s subordinate, the situation has changed.

Guren sighed. *Actually it didn’t change anything. It’s still the same as ever.*

The Hiiragi House is strong, and the Ichinose House is just lowly branch house trash.

Can I really overturn this?

The path Mahiru chose has already deviated from humanity.

A path that no human should walk on, the path of Shura.

Then, I……

“……”

Guren suddenly thought of what Mahiru had said. The message that Shinoa had passed to

him.

『Even though the path taken is different, the destination is still the same.』

These words appeared in Guren's mind,

"…… My… path……"

Guren muttered softly as he left the interrogation room.

◆

The interrogation room is located underneath the gym. *Probably for the students of the Hiiragi House to undergo training in resisting interrogations.*

Guren looked exhausted as he left the gym.

The sky was red.

The sun had already set.

School should already have finished, but there are some still students training inside of the school.

Guren looked on coldly and debated whether to return to the school or return home. His bag was still in the classroom, but he assumed that Sayuri or Shigure would have helped him take it back. His mobile phone was confiscated. All his weapons would also have been sent home.

"…… Ah, really so nosy."

Guren turned around, ready to go home.

Then, at that moment,

"Ichinose Guren!"

Suddenly, someone yelled at him from across the field. Guren recognised this voice.

Juujou Mito.

But Guren didn't respond to her and continued on his way.

"Wait a minute!"

"……."

"Stand still!"

Guren suddenly felt a killing aura on his back.

He had better respond.

"Can you don't squawk so much, I haven't had much sleep."

Guren turned around and narrowed his eyes at Mito.

Striking red hair. A pair of strong-willed eyes accompanied with a small solemn face.

For whatever reason, Mito looked furious. Guren didn't know what he had done to make her angry.

However, Mito was muttering an incantation under her breath. *A Hiiragi House spell.* She uses the spell to enhance her strength, a technique that takes on the ability of a God.

Her red hair suddenly had become redder, almost like a wheel on fire.

This is a type of spell that borrows power from demons, Guren had already investigated it. But he had only seen it once. Of course, it warranted a more detailed study.

She's using the 『Vajrayaksa Curse』.

"I can't believe you tricked me, I'm going to kill you!"

Mito's words were not to be taken lightly. She lightly treads the ground and lets out an unimaginable howl. The ground below had sunk. Mito leapt like lightning and charged towards Guren.

An ordinary person——no, even a person who have received training would not be able to keep up with this speed.

Mito's power is really this strong.

Then, Guren just stood there tiredly, not moving at all. Mito's fist was almost at his face.

Mito spoke.

"You still want to hide your strength……"

But her words were suddenly interrupted.

Because Guren had stepped back and easily caught her arm. He flipped her arm and restricted her joints. Mito wanted to escape by breaking her joints, but Guren had already expected it.

Guren took advantage of Mito's momentum and swept her calf.

"Uwah!"

Mito let out a scream and lost her balance. But Guren didn't stop there and pulled her arm to the ground. Seeing how she was going to fall on the ground——just a second before.

Guren grabbed the collar of her uniform to prevent her from falling down.

Then, he looked down at Mito who looked like she could not process what had just happened, and said.

"Oi oi, don't just fall in such a place."

This time, Mito had already figured out the situation. She raised her head at Guren,

"Are, are you joking? You're so powerful, why, why did you have to hide your strength!?"

Mito asked angrily.

Guren answered her.

“If I exposed this strength, will I still be bullied?”

“You, you’re so powerful, how can……”

“I’m an Ichinose, Mito.”

Mito’s eyes widened in surprise. The look on her face, to hear these words, she finally understood the burden that Guren had been carrying.

But she doesn’t really understand anything. Whether the Ichinose House is powerless. Or the Hiiragi House is strong. If she is born into the Hiiragi House, then she still doesn’t know a lot of things.

Mito brushed off Guren’s hand and stood up.

“Then, then you’ve been hiding your strength even though you’re this strong? You’ve treated my sympathy and scolding like a joke?”

Mito didn’t expect Guren to shake his head.

“Not at all.”

“But, but, I’ve said some really mean things to you.”

“You did?”

“Yes! And you just accepted everything I’ve said. You endured all my cursing at you. This means, even if you were secretly laughing at me, I also……”

Guren interrupted her.

“I’m not that interested in you to the extent that I would just laugh at you.”

“Then……”

“And I’m also not that free. You finished?”

Hearing Guren’s words, Mito had a hurt expression on her face. Guren saw that she had tears in her eyes. Whether because they didn’t reconcile, or whether she had been born into the noble house of Juujou, she had never received such humiliating words before.

But it didn’t matter what the reason was. Because Guren hadn’t slept well these last few days.

Guren turned around and left.

Then, from behind, Mito shouted.

“But, but you saved me!”

“……”

“At the field, the attack…… If you hadn’t saved me, I would have died!”

“……”

“Why!? If you wanted to hide your power, then you shouldn’t have saved me. But you still help me whom you’re not interested in. Why on earth would you do that!?”

These words just entered Guren’s ears.

Guren was fed up. *Why did I save Mito and Goshi that time?*

Maybe it was a subconscious instinctive reaction?

Seeing people he knew dying, and not doing anything to help. Stupid behaviour. This was his weakness.

Guren didn’t answer and walked out of school.

But the more depressing thing was that Goshi was standing at the entrance. Arms crossed, looking at Guren. He had seen the fight between Guren and Kureto, so he also witnessed his strength.

Goshi said.

“You’re really too much. Aren’t you a genius or something?”

“……”

“Just a little effort and you’re already so strong——I suppose that’s expected of you from your parents and attendants?”

Guren laughed and then said.

“Ah, that’s right. My dad praises me every day.”

“Don’t kid me.”

“Did you really think that?”

“Ah?”

“I’m strong. But, so what? Being an Ichinose, even if I was born a god, what can I do?”

“……”

“Hiiragi House masters, and you from the Goshi House. And behind there, the red hair girl from Juujou House. So, what am I? Just a smelly rat from the Ichinose House. It already doesn’t matter how strong you are.”

Goshi looked at Guren and said.

“What, I only heard that your character is really distorted.”

“Ah, then you better not get close to me.”

“Definitely not, how can I do that? Not matter what, you saved me.”

“So you owe me your life?”

“How is that possible?”

Goshi laughed.

“But I want to be your friend.”

“In your dreams……”

“What? Even though the red haired Juujou girl had already asked you, why did you save me?”

Guren immediately answered.

“The situation called for it, that’s all.”

“Ah ah, you’re really good at making things up. You shouldn’t have saved me that time. Otherwise, you playing the fool would have no meaning. But yet you saved me. Why?”

“……”

“You are really……”

Goshi was once again finding faults in other people, but Guren didn’t need to listen so he walked off.

Then he heard some nonsense from Goshi behind him.

“You’re really a good person, eh! Or just really easily lonely. But whatever it is, you’re my saviour, so because of this, I won’t ignore you. So we’re already friends, let’s be nice to each other!”

Guren scoffed. He didn’t look back and only said one word.

“Idiot.”

“Ahaha.”

Guren heard Goshi’s laughter. *Really so annoying.*

But this sound started to fade away.

“……”

On the way home, Guren thought about Goshi and Mito’s words.

Why did I save them?

Why couldn’t I watch them die in front of me?

This weakness is really bad. As long as there is a need——in order to obtain things, to achieve my goal, as long as it is necessary, even if it’s Sayuri or Shigure’s lives, I need to be able to give it up easily. This way of living is necessary for the future.

Since the opponents are the Hiiragi House.

And 《Hyakuya Church》.

The opponents are strong organisations, all stronger than me. I have been planning to increase my strength little by little, in order to one day fight back. But, I have such a useless

emotion to hold me back, this really shouldn't happen.

"…… Good person……. Good person, eh?"

Guren berated himself and smiled bitterly.

He raised his head to look at the sky. In his vision, the high rise apartment where he lived.

Sayuri and Shigure, are they already home?

Guren thought of their faces and considered the situation——*if Sayuri and Shigure's lives were at risk, could I really ignore them and let them die?* Guren thought about this.

Then,

"Surely…… you must have been able to abandon everything, right, Mahiru?"

Guren called out the name of the girl who did not stop in her pursuit of power, whom he had made a promise with in his childhood, and let out a sigh.

Volume 2 Chapter 5 – Hooky Break

Guren did not attend school for the next few days.

He managed to steal a few days of rest.

"……."

Guren opened his eyes. He was still lying on his bed. Staring at the seeing, then he looked over at the clock beside his bed.

It was 5:30.

Basically, Guren woke up at the same time every day. Maybe because he had been waking up at this time for many years that as a result of this practice, Guren would be sure to wake up at this time even without the alarm clock.

Guren got out of bed. He was wearing a casual sweatshirt. These few days, in order to repair the body from the interrogation and to recuperate at home, he ignored Kureto's order and did not go to school, but——regarding the injuries, he couldn't do much at all. Rather, because Guren could not move his body during the interrogation, his body had become rather stiff.

Guren moved his wrist and neck to check today's physical condition.

"…… Mm. It's fine now."

He muttered as he left the room.

The Ichinose House rented out the two upper floors of the building for Guren, the only pentroom in this mansion block. Guren, Shigure, and Sayuri, the three of them, live in this 5LDK* apartment.

Walking out into the room, he saw Shigure coming out of the living area and bowing.

“Good morning, Guren-sama, it is time for breakfast.”

Then suddenly, Sayuri wearing a sailor uniform and an apron stumbled out from the kitchen.

“Today’s breakfast is fish, Guren-sama. Is this fine with you?”

Guren replied.

“Have I ever objected?”

“No, you haven’t.”

“Then you don’t need to ask.”

“But but, if you tell me what you want to eat, then I’ll be more motivated.”

After listening to her, Guren replied with a smile.

“Curry.”

“Not again~”

Sayuri smiled happily and turned back to the kitchen.

Shigure turned to Guren and asked.

“Guren-sama, are you going to school today?”

“No.”

“Your body is still……?”

Shigure said with a look of concern.

Guren shook his head and replied.

“No, the body is fine, it’s just that there is no need to go. Besides, I’ve already been exposed in a bad way.”

Guren smiled as he spoke, but Shigure could not smile.

“I’ll never forgive the Hiiragi House. They even tortured Guren-sama……”

“It’s not really that much of a torture.”

“But—”

“Besides, even though I was tortured——no, even though Father was almost killed, we cannot allow anger to get to our weak selves, that would be really regretful. The problem is not with the Hiiragi House. It is that we are powerless ourselves.”

“……”

Shigure was unwilling to look at Guren.

When Guren met her gaze, he said.

“Ah, but, this is not your fault. It’s because I didn’t have enough power.”

“No, it’s not……”

Shigure’s expression was one of concern. Guren was very frustrated to see his own subordinates this way.

Then, Sayuri spoke.

“Breakfast is ready~”

Guren nodded and the three of them ate together. Even the coffee was already prepared. It was very meticulous. After breakfast, Guren sat on the sofa and turned on the TV.

The morning news was on. But because Guren rarely watched TV, he didn’t even know who the newscaster was.

But he still continued to stare at the TV and gave an order.

“Sayuri, bring my phone here.”

“Yes.”

Sayuri brought his phone over. Guren took it and dialled his home number. After several rings, the call got through.

“Guren?”

It was the head of Ichinose House——Guren’s father’s voice.

Guren answered.

“How is your condition?”

“How are you? Heard you were tortured.”

“I’m fine.”

“Is that so?”

“How about you, Father?”

“No problem.”

He’s lying, Guren thought. *His heart even stopped during the interrogation. It must have taken more than a few days to recover. He even sounded tired.*

But Guren still asked.

“Father right now is very weak, how is everything there then? The leadership is collapsing?”

Ichinose House was badly beaten up by Hiiragi House. The sound of angry voices emerging was not surprising, there was too much despair towards the Ichinose House, so the internal collapse of the『Mikado no Tsuki』*——this was expected from within.*

But Father answered simply.

“Everyone is already used to it.”

“…… Ah, I see.”

“This is not the first time we have been oppressed by Hiiragi House.”

“…… Ah.”

“And those from the 『Mikado no Tsuki』 have always been discriminated against. Even if we wanted to betray them and seek refuge with Hiiragi House, we will never be accepted by them.”

“……”

“So don’t worry about this. Compared to this……”

Hearing Father’s words, Guren nodded his head while watching the TV. The time was fast approaching 6am.

Then,

“During the six o’clock news, they will lift the ban on information regarding the 《Hyakuya Church》.”

Father said.

At that moment, the news started.

The newscaster that just appeared on TV spoke.

“We have just received a big piece of news. Yesterday, in Ueno, Tokyo, animals were killed by something——this news……”

“Animals were killed?”

Guren muttered. His father on the other end said.

“The conclusion is that the animals were killed by poison. And because of the possible effect of the poison residue, they have sealed off a 500 metre radius from the zoo.”

Guren visualised a map of the area. *The zoo is right next to the Ueno Station, so the station must also be sealed off——there are about 200,000 people who use that station on average daily, if it really is sealed off, then that’s a major problem.*

Father spoke.

“The trains are probably still in operation. But, the west exit of Ueno Station——where it leads out to the zoo is blocked off.”

“Mm, and then?”

“This information was known at 2am last night. But the information was controlled.”

“Is this the 《Hyakuya Church》’s doing?”

“Yes.”

“What on earth happened?”

“I don’t know. It is not clear whether the animals died by poison. But it is true that the area has been sealed off.”

“So, you want me to investigate?”

But,

“I’ll leave it to you. I have only reported what the『Mikado no Tsuki』has found out. It should be useful information to you, eh?”

Father said so.

It should be useful information to you, eh? ——in other words, if Hiiragi House and 《Hyakuya Church》 *want to destroy each other, to this absurd daydreaming brat, it might be useful information.*

Guren nodded.

“Ah, you’re right. Thanks for your help.”

Silence followed, then Father spoke.

“Guren?”

“Hm?”

“Don’t fool around. If you’re killed, then it’s meaningless.”

“I know.”

“If you’re dead, strength and rights have no meaning.”

“Mm.”

“Ah, forget it. You have more brains than me, so it shouldn’t be a problem.”

Hearing this, Guren laughed and said.

“If I really had brains, then I won’t be so obsessed with power.”

“Haha.”

“Alright, I’ll hang up now, Father. I still have things to do.”

“I understand.”

“I’ll visit soon.”

“It’s fine here. You just do what you have to do.”

“Mm. Alright, then I’ll go now.”

“Ah.”

Guren hung up. On the TV, the Ueno situation has become a big problem. *This is natural. This is a big problem that the surrounding areas in Ueno have been sealed off.*

Sayuri spoke.

“Can’t believe there are such cruel people!”

But Guren said.

“Prepare my clothes.”

Hearing this, Shigure asked.

“Your school uniform?”

Guren shook his head.

“No, just casual clothes. I’m going to Ueno……”

Just then, the phone rang.

“Mm?”

He looked down at the phone, it was an unrecognisable phone. He pressed the call button and picked it up.

“Who is this?”

Guren asked and the person on the other end replied.

“It’s me.”

Hiiragi Kureto’s voice.

Guren narrowed his eyes and said.

“What do you want?”

Then Kureto replied.

“Nothing much, just heard that you have refused to come to school.”

“It’s because you tortured me.”

“Are you seriously the type of guy that would say something like that?”

“But I’m really weak.”

“Haha, a person that calls himself weak, this is the first I’ve heard of it.”

“Then, what do you want?”

Kureto replied.

“Come to school today.”

“What if I refuse?”

“You don’t have that choice. This is an order. I have something for you to do.”

“What is it?”

“Come then I’ll tell you. See you at the student council room at 9am.”

The call was suddenly cut off. Kureto only cared about what he wanted to say, then hung up.

Guren frowned and looked at the TV again. On TV, there was a professor who had experience in these types of poisons, his face looked knowledgeable and reputable.

At this time, Sayuri called out from behind.

“Guren-sama, for outer wear, would you like the parka or jacket……?”

But Guren interrupted her.

“Change of plans. Bring me my uniform.”

And then he got up from the sofa.

◆

The same route to school.

However, it looked different from usual.

The students looked at Guren from far. Whispering among each other. Usually, someone would have already made trouble, a can of coke flying over would not be unusual.

Sayuri tilted her head and said.

“What on earth is going on?”

Shigure had her guard on and said.

“…… What are these people from Hiiragi House up to?”

Then something happened. The male student who threw the coke earlier came forward.

“Ah, ah, Ichinose-kun.”

His voice was trembling and he called out to Guren. His face had a look of absolute fear.

The male student bowed his head and said.

“That time when I threw that cola at you, I’m sorry. I didn’t know that you were Kureto-sama’s subordinate……”

So this is what’s happened.

The news of Guren being under Hiiragi House had spread to the whole school. Guren ignored that student and continued walking. But, the student spoke again from behind,

“I am really sorry about that! Even if you can’t forgive me, then……”

His voice was trembling that he sounded like he was crying.

Guren didn’t have a choice but to reply.

“You’re forgiven, so just shut up now.”

“Real—really?”

“So noisy. Just shut your mouth.”

“Tha—thank you!”

He still sounded like he was going to cry.

Then, Shigure looked at Guren.

“…… Just now, what he said.”

Guren nodded.

“It’s true. I just haven’t told you.”

“During the interrogation, you were ordered to become his subordinate?”

But Guren replied to this.

“No. It’s the same as before. We have always been under the Hiiragi House, haven’t we?”

“But, this also means that, pretending to be his subordinate…… But, one day there will be……”

Sayuri interrupted her. For some reason, her voice had a rare tone of blame.

“Yuki-chan.”

“Eh?”

“If Guren-sama said that it has always been the same, then it is exactly what he said.”

Shigure widened her eyes,

“Ah….. I suppose so.”

Almost as if she had understood something, she nodded her head. It looked like she had decided already.

Shigure continued.

For some reason she had an apologetic expression on her face,

“I apologise for being so panic stricken. Guren-sama, the thought that you suffered so much when I wasn’t there, from then onwards, I couldn’t sleep.”

Hearing this, Guren laughed.

“Ha, the one who was tortured was me and you can’t sleep?”

“…… I apologise deeply.”

“But, it can’t be helped that you’re disheartened. Right now, it is difficult to win over Kureto.”

At this moment, it is not an individual’s strength, but the rightful group’s power that will lead to a landslide victory.

Even though I would like to gain power during the conflict between 『Mikado no Tsuki』 *and* 《Hyakuya Church》*, in order to find more about those two beaten out organisations and actively collect information, I know it’s not as simple as that.*

Then Shigure nervously said.

“I’m, I’m not that disheartened……”

“If you say so. As long as you’re willing to follow me, then it’s fine.”

Hearing this, Shigure did not speak again. Sayuri, who was seemingly happily blushing, said,

“How about me? I’m also thinking the same thing as Guren-sama, right?”

“You’re too noisy.”

“Eh————————!?”

She raised her hand and had an expression of shock on her face as she went over to Shigure’s side. She pouted,

“Only Yuki-chan is that cunning all the time~”

And said so.

Shigure smiled,

“…… Guren-sama surely likes Sayuri!”

“Really~?”

“Because Sayuri is always cheerful, and good at cooking, as for me……”

Then Shigure stopped.

Sayuri was also silent.

The two of them looked over with some kind of unexplained expression, but Guren had absolutely no interest in these meaningless conversations.

Guren looked lazily to the side.

At the entrance of the First Shibuya High School was a man standing there with a group of other students.

Brown coloured hair, narrow snake-like eyes. A ring on his lip.

Hiiragi Seishirou.

The guy who viciously beat up Sayuri in the sorcery selection examination.

It looked like Seishirou's target was Guren, his eyes glared annoyingly at Guren's direction.

This moment, Shigure and Sayuri reacted. They stepped forward as though to protect Guren.

"Guren-sama, please step back……"

But Guren said.

"Ah, don't need to protect me. I don't have to hide my power anymore."

At the same moment,

"Eh!?"

A clear expression of joy emerged on Sayuri and Shigure's faces.

Sayuri said,

"Then, then, then that means that Guren-sama had finally showed his true powers to those people from the Hiiragi House?"

Shigure couldn't help but be pleased and said.

"Heh, heheh, those people must surely have been shocked. They finally know who they are dealing with……"

This time, Seishirou yelled out.

"Oi, Ichinose rat!"

Guren raised his head.

"What do you want?"

Seishirou laughed.

"Oi, oi, just because Kureto thinks highly of you, your attitude has changed so much? What is it? You have nothing to fear when you look into Kureto's eyes?"

Hearing Seishirou's words, those following him laughed. *The people here aren't scared of Kureto. Anyway, it seems that because Seishirou is a Hiiragi, so as long they flatter him, they should be fine.*

Seishirou spoke.

"What Kureto does has nothing to do with me. I do whatever the hell I want to do."

Hearing that alone, Guren had understood. *That guy feels inferior to Kureto. Even though they are both Hiiragi, no matter how you look at it, the difference in power between him and the student council president is big.*

"I won't let you off. Besides, it's so strange to allow someone from the trash Ichinose House

to become a subordinate, isn't it? Don't you feel the same way?"

He pretended to ask those around him.

The students all burst into laughter.

But not everyone. Only those in Seishirou's group were laughing. *Everyone else is scared of Kureto, so they remain on the sidelines. Always following the stronger side.*

After all……

"Besides those with the Hiiragi name, don't I have the same status as everyone else……"

Guren said softly.

In order not to become overwhelmed, he desperately tried to keep up with the situation and tried to avoid the spotlight.

Seishirou looked towards the other students,

"What the hell are you doing? Laugh dammit!"

And cried out.

However, the other students kept quiet and did not listen to Seishirou.

"Bastards!"

Seishirou started to become anxious.

Guren watched all this,

"……"

And thought that he could use this person.

This man with the Hiiragi name.

This man who is very interested in power, but cannot match up to Kureto. Knowing that he cannot beat him, yet he still refuses to acknowledge this because of his ego, this is very useful indeed.

Guren took a step forward.

"Oi, you bastard, who said you could just move!"

"……"

"Don't you dare ignore me!"

"……"

"Oi!"

The moment that Guren passed by Seishirou, Seishirou reached out to Guren's shoulder.

Guren grabbed his arm.

Seishirou reacted quickly. Staring with this eyes, he brushed away Guren's hand. *This movement isn't a normal kind of fast. Of course, he is a Hiiragi. I'm afraid that he is above even Mito and Goshi.*

Seishirou smiled and raised his first and aimed it in Guren's direction.

"I've seriously been underestimated, I'll teach you to know your own place……"

And violently hit him.

But he was no longer able to speak, Guren had already placed a talisman on Seishirou's neck. Guren only needed to say the incantation and Seishirou's throat would be blasted off by the talisman, even his head might come flying off.

Seishirou realised this.

Seishirou got a big shock at Guren's movement that didn't seem to match his power, especially having placed a talisman on his own neck. His eyes widened and tried to stop it with his hand, but Guren had already grabbed his hand and pulled it towards his own cheek. Seishirou's fist had hit the side of his face.

"Guh!"

Seishirou lost his balance, and Guren fell together with him.

Looking up at Guren's body, Seishirou said in shock.

"Your, your…… power, what on earth……"

Guren leaned beside Seishirou's eye and spoke softly.

"Please keep quiet, Seishirou-sama. I bring a secret message from Hiiragi Tenri-sama."

"……"

Then, as if he understood, Seishirou's whole body tensed up.

Hiiragi Tenri, the name of the head of the Hiiragi House.

The father of Kureto, Seishirou, and Mahiru.

The house affiliated with 『Mikado no Oni』, one of their top people.

Seishirou stared at Guren and asked.

"Father's secret order….. what is it?"

Of course it's bullshit.

But Guren continued.

"I cannot say the details of the matter. But Tenri-sama suspects that there is an inside traitor related to the April attacks by 《Hyakuya Church》."

"…… Ah."

"But regarding the current investigations, it appears that Seishirou-sama has been cleared of

suspicion.”

Seishirou was nervous to reply.

“Of, of course! The elite Hiiragi blood flows within me!”

Looking at this guy who called himself elite, Guren tried hard to hold back his laughter and continued speaking.

“But, that person has been hiding very well, and he has not revealed his true colours.”

Seishirou carefully considered this.

“Is it Shinya? That guy is always so strange, Also, he is adopted——”

“No. It’s Kureto-sama.”

“What?”

“Kureto-sama, in order to get rid of the competition between the next candidates for the head of the house Mahiru-sama, that’s what he had done right? This type of interference ——”

“Is what Father has deduced?”

Seishirou asked.

But, Guren wilfully put on an expression that showed that he couldn’t say anymore.

“Seishirou-sama. Regarding this matter, please keep it secret——this is an order. If other people find out that I have leaked this out……”

At this, Seishirou nodded his head.

“Of course. If Kureto really is the traitor, then it can’t get out. But, this matter, why did you tell me?”

Hearing this, Guren looked like he had a hard time answer and was being vague.

“That……”

“Why?”

“It’s really hard to say……”

“Quickly tell me. It’s an order.”

Hearing this order, Guren then said.

“…… What I believe is that Tenri-sama regards you quite highly. Everyone outside thinks that Kureto-sama will be the next candidate, but I think that Tenri-sama doesn’t seem to trust Kureto-sama.”

Obviously hearing this, Seishirou’s expression became very lively.

“So, I believe you show great promise, that……”

“Sucking up to me, eh?”

Guren put on an expression of shame and nodded.

Seishirou suddenly cheered up.

“If this is the case, thank you for telling me.”

“But this matter, Tenri-sama, he……”

“No problem. Don’t worry. Then you being Kureto’s subordinate……”

Guren nodded.

“It’s Tenri-sama’s order. Tenri-sama ordered Kureto-sama to manage the unknown intentions of the Ichinose House trash. But the truth is——”

“You’re monitoring Kureto?”

“Yes.”

“Alright, I understand. I’ll help you. Then, what do we do now? Do I forgive you? Or…..”

“Just as usual. I do not want to let Kureto-sama to find out about our relationship.”

Seishirou became happier and happier. To be participating in framing Kureto, he was so happy he couldn’t help himself and nodded vigorously.

“I understand. Then let’s fight.”

“Please.”

“No problem. It won’t hurt.”

Seishirou’s fist flew towards Guren’s face. But there was no pain. It was really ingenious, it looked like Guren had been severely hit, but the fist stopped before it touched the skin.

Seishirou shouted.

“…… Ha, so you know who’s powerful now, you Ichinose trash. If you’ve learnt your lesson, then don’t come after me again!”

Guren lay on the ground and answered.

“…… I apologise deeply.”

Seishirou stood up and said.

“As long as you know it. Oi, let’s get out of here.”

Then, Seishirou and his gang had quickly left. He and his followers were all laughing as they walked off.

Seeing them, Guren couldn’t help but smile. *Just like that, Seishirou is dragged into this mess. Believing that lie, even if this misunderstanding continues, his movements will become stranger and stranger. Under such circumstances, so the traitor in contact with* 《Hyakuya Church》 *could be Seishirou. Asking questions about this development, it should be this*

simple.

Even if Seishirou found out about this trap, he also can't explain it so easily. No matter what, this sort of meaningless lie cannot be seen through, for someone with the Hiiragi name, it's bad for him.

So Seishirou already cannot get out of this trap.

Guren sat up.

Then Shigure and Sayuri came over.

Shigure spoke.

"Ah, Guren-sama."

"What is it?"

"I thought that you would give that guy a severe beating."

But instead Guren smiled and answered.

"No, I can't possibly give the guy who beat up Sayuri this kind of outcome."

"Ah……"

Sayuri made a sound.

Guren stood up and asked.

"So, how much did you see? Did you see the talisman I pulled out?"

The both of them were surprised and shook their heads. *Looks like they didn't see anything. That's good. If these two couldn't see it, then what just transpired, I'm sure no one else saw it too.*

But,

"You two need more practice."

After Guren said this, Sayuri then asked.

"Then, Guren-sama. What happened just now?"

"I won't tell those who couldn't see it."

"Eeh!"

Shigure then spoke.

"To be beaten up so badly, but still no injuries. This is to say that you weren't hit at all? It seemed that you and Seishirou had said something…… As your attendants, we would like to fully grasp the situation."

Guren replied to this.

"My subordinates may be forced to drink truth serum during torture, so I will not reveal what

happened to you.”

Then Sayuri said.

“That’s not a problem. Before the torture, I would think of a way to commit suicide, we have long been trained to……”

But, Guren interrupted her.

“That’s why. If I don’t reveal this information to you, then you won’t have to kill yourself. So, this is how it is for now. I’ll ask for your help when the situation has progressed a bit. So……”

Now that I’ve done this, the gears have begun to move.

While I don’t want to reveal the situation with Seishirou, but, if I really want to get involved in the war between《Hyakuya Church》 *and* 『Mikado no Oni』, *then in order to come up on top between this fight, I need to make a drastic move.*

If I don’t do this, I’ll get further away from Mahiru.

So I have to act.

What can be done before this point of time, I didn’t know. But, according to Mahiru, the world will be destroyed at Christmas. Although it is not clear what kind of disaster it would be, but it is clear that it will bring about chaos.

But, before that, I have to build up a strong position.

Now it’s June.

Only six more months.

So Guren said.

“…… It might be that our days at school are numbered. I’m afraid that we might be involved in the war. If this is the case, even if you don’t die, others will. The worst case scenario is that everyone will end up dead. So before we come to this, let’s happily enjoy the last moments at school. It might be your last chance to wear the school uniform.”

Saying this, watching his two attendants wearing the sailor uniform, Guren smiled.

*5LDK stands for 5 bedrooms, Living room, Dining room, Kitchen. This is how Japanese homes are described in real estate ads.

Volume 2 Chapter 6 – The Creation of the Squad

9 o’clock.

On the way to the student council room, Guren bumped into Hiiragi Shinya along the corridor.

Shinya spoke.

“Yo, long time no see. Heard you haven’t been at school because you’re opposed to going to school?”

Guren turned to look at Shinya putting on an act and replied.

“I’ve always hated this school.”

“Haha, I understand I understand. With your bad attitude, no wonder you don’t have any friends.”

“Ahh?”

“I’ve heard from Goshi and Mito. They said that actually you’re not a bad person, just scared of being lonely.”

“Lies. What on earth are you up to?”

“Ahaha. It doesn’t matter, at least you’re here. I thought that you succumbed to Kureto’s torture and ran off.”

Guren replied.

“That’s the truth.”

“Ehh. Then what did you say during the interrogation?”

“Nothing.”

“Then what about Mahiru?”

“Didn’t say a thing.”

No, regarding Mahiru, it was not even mentioned to someone from the Ichinose House. So Father wasn’t even pressed about it. Because he absolutely didn’t know a thing.

Shinya said.

“So you didn’t surrender?”

“No, I surrendered. How can I beat the strong and mighty Kureto-sama?”

“Hahaha, you’re a funny one.”

“Alright enough. How about you? This is the way to the student council office. You’ve also been summoned by Kureto?”

Hearing this, Shinya nodded.

“Yup. Quite scary eh. Almost as if it’s some mission.”

“Mission……?”

It also sounded like that when Kureto called earlier.

“Me too. He said there was something he wanted me——”

Just then, from around the corner, the student council room could be seen. At the entrance stood Sayuri and Shigure, as well as Goshi and Mito.

Sayuri and Shigure looked at Shinya and Guren and had bright smiles on their faces.

For some reason, Mito looked a little angry with a somewhat difficult expression and glanced towards Guren and Shinya from time to time.

Goshi raised his arm,

“Oiii!”

And called out loudly.

It seems that besides me, Kureto also called for Shigure, Sayuri, Shinya, Goshi, and Mito.

Everyone here, out of all the students from this school, were the few that would talk to Guren.

Shinya spoke.

“Ah~, so this, Guren……”

“Hm?”

“Maybe we should be a little more nervous? Kureto might think we are all be traitors, so that’s why he called us out, have you thought of this as well?”

Regarding this questions, Guren nodded.

“Of course I have.”

So that was why Guren was attentive to his surroundings. Whether he was being followed, whether there was an assassin lurking around. Kureto pondered deeply on this point. *Despite his extraordinary strength, he also won’t fight by himself. This behaviour does not make any sense. I’m sure that he also has a few talented people by his side. I can’t compete against the strength of the entire group.*

But, I can’t seem to sense the presence of any enemies. There is no killing aura around us whatsoever.

But still, Guren was still vigilant and said.

“Shinya.”

“Yes?”

“If we were to be attacked, I will take Shigure and Sayuri and retreat the same way. You take Goshi and Mito and escape through the other corridor.”

“Two different routes to separate the enemy’s force?”

“At least this way we have a higher change of escaping, right?”

Shinya heard this and laughed.

“I can’t do much about it. This is the Hiiragi House territory. If they really made a move, we would all die anyway.”

“……”

“The Ichinose House will all be eradicated in a few days.”

“……”

“Forget about it then. If we get killed, then it is fate.”

This must be their one and only chance to get rid of the adopted son, this is Shinya’s thinking.

If we are really killed, then it is fate——

This way of thinking is really,

“Not that bad eh.”

Guren quietly muttered.

“What?”

“No, nothing.”

At that moment, Guren and Shinya arrived in front of the student council room.

Sayuri spoke.

“Apologies, Guren-sama. I was suddenly called out here and have not informed you……”

“It’s alright. Compared to this……”

Guren whispered softly into Shigure and Sayuri’s ears.

“Be more cautious. There is a possibility of getting killed.”

The two suddenly increased their vigilance.

Then, Mito who was staring at Guren said.

“What’s all this hush-hush secrecy? So annoying. Is there something you’re not telling us?”

“……”

Guren ignored her.

“Wait a minute!”

“So noisy. Please just leave me alone already.”

But Mito wasn’t planning on leaving Guren alone

“I can’t do that. Firstly, from today onwards, we are going to be teammates, so you need to change your attitude!”

“Team?”

Guren asked. It looked like Mito already knew the reason why the five of them were all called

today.

Guren wanted to ask for more details, but,

“Is everyone here now? Then, please come in.”

It came from a female voice.

The door to the student council room opened.

The person who opened the door was a female student. She had golden hair tied in two ponytails, she looked extremely beautiful.

Looking at the female student, Mito got a shock.

“Sanguu Aoi-san! Why are you here?”

Sanguu——Guren knew this surname. Like Goshi and Juujou, it was one of the families that are allied with the Hiiragi House.

Apparently, the Sanguu House had a daughter in the same class as Guren, but from the start of school, she had never attended school.

But, it looked like this golden haired girl was from the Sanguu House.

The girl called Aoi looked at them with her jade green eyes, she didn’t answer Mito’s question and only said.

“Please come in.”

Guren looked at inside the house, the room seemed pretty big.

Once inside, there were two sofas for visitors to use and a coffee table. Inside further, there was a cold, black desk and Kureto was sitting behind it.

The layout of this room was similar to the school principal’s.

“So you’ve become the principal?”

Once Guren opened his mouth, Kureto raised his head. He stared coldly at the clock on the wall.

9:02.

Kureto spoke.

“You’re late.”

“So what?”

“Next time you’re late, you will be punished.”

“Really? So what will you do?”

“I’ll kill your subordinates one by one.”

Kureto’s tone was monotonous. It wasn’t a threat; he would actually do it.

Guren glared at Kureto and said.

“I understand.”

“Then good. Be mindful next time. Alright, and also about what you just said.”

“Ah?”

“You said that I’ve become the principal. Here, I am above the principal. If I wanted the principal killed, he would obey without a word. You are also the same, Ichinose Guren. In my eyes, you and the principal are no different. I am king, you are the servant——do you understand?”

Guren looked at Kureto. It looked at Kureto would not take dissent lightly.

“This has already been decided, hasn’t it?”

“Exactly.”

“Then, I understand. So, why have you called me?”

Hearing that, a smile emerged on Kureto’s face for the first time.

“Good people are sensible. Sit then. Aoi, pour tea for everyone.”

“Yes.”

Aoi nodded, opened the door to the room next to the student council room and went in. *It felt like there were other people in the other room, probably the members of the student council.*

Shinya spoke from the side.

“There are six other student council members. Three of whom are Second Years. The remaining three are Third Years. Ahhh, all upperclassmen, that’s scary.”

Not sure whether it was a real or feigned fear, Shinya grinned cheekily.

But, Mito and Goshi appeared really nervous. *Of course. We have all entered the throne room of this school, where Kureto has absolute control.*

Kureto spoke.

“Alright, please sit.”

Goshi, Mito, and Shinya all sat upon hearing this.

But Guren did not.

If anything were to happen, I can’t react in time if I sit.

“What is it?”

Hearing Kureto ask this question, Guren replied.

“I’m not here to play house. If there’s anything you want me to do, then just spit it out.”

Mito nervously said.

“Oi, Guren! Kureto-sama told you to sit down……”

But Kureto interrupted her.

“No no, it’s alright, Juujou. I like his type of attitude.”

“Eh?”

Mito looked at Kureto.

Kureto continued.

“This attitude, with real power, you’re not interested in anything besides the truth of things. Other people place too much importance on useless things. Complaining, excuses, pretense. Hey Guren, you hate all those things, right?”

At this, Guren smiled faintly and replied.

“You probably talk a lot of nonsense.”

“Haha.”

Just then, Aoi came from the other room. She was holding a tray of seven cups.

“Kureto-sama as well……?”

Hearing Aoi’s words, he nodded.

“I’ll have one.”

Aoi firstly placed a cup in front of Kureto.

Seeing this, Shinya laughed.

“Kureto big brother drinks first in front of guests? That’s not very hospitable.”

Goshi frantically interrupted him.

“Seriously, Guren and Shinya-sama both please don’t say anymore. In this situation, why do you still have that attitude?”

Kureto held his cup and said.

“You’re not guests.”

“Heh, does that mean that Kureto big brother will be polite in front of guests?”

At this question, Kureto thought about his answer before replying.

“Hm, how do I say this? If there is one side applying pressure, then there will be another side taking the pressure. But, I will deeply respect my subordinates who are obedient. So this is why tea is served.”

Hearing this, Shinya took the red tea in his head and raised it at Guren and said.

“Hey Guren. Did you hear? This is respect, eh?”

“Hmph, a cheap tribute.”

Guren replied.

Hearing both of them speak, Mito and Goshi were scared, their faces beginning to turn green.

But Kureto laughed unexpectedly.

“You two are really interesting, eh? So what do I have to bring out to pay my respects? Maybe give you a lot of money?”

Guren glared at Kureto and said.

“Don’t waste any more time. I don’t want your respect. So just quickly tell me what you want.”

Kureto nodded.

“Alright then. Enough dillydallying. Aoi, the information.”

“Yes.”

Then, somehow, Aoi began distributing pieces of paper on the coffee table. The pieces of paper were also distributed to Guren who was standing and his two subordinates.

Guren looked at the paper in his hand.

It looks like the picture was taken from above, overlooking Ueno. It’s dated today. The news said that the animals died because of poisoning, so that’s why there is a massive lockdown now.

But looking at this photo, it looks like the middle of Ueno Zoo had been bombed, or hit by a large meteorite.

Mito spoke.

“This is today’s news……”

Kureto nodded.

“That’s right. Have you heard about this on the news?”

Everyone nodded.

Kureto continued.

“But this news is fake. According to the Intelligence Division of the『Mikado no Oni』, the entire region of Ueno had become the《Hyakuya Church》’s experiment area. There was some accident that occurred. And now 《Hyakuya Church》is desperately trying to cover it up.”

Guren asked.

“What experiment?”

“Not sure. Even though we’ve long known of their experiments in Ueno, we have never intended to go to war with them, so we have never investigated it. If we want to investigate, we should be able to do it easily. But, right now, we have a lot of secrets that we don’t want the other side to find out.”

“But now the situation has changed.”

“Exactly. They broke the inviolable treaty. The war has started.”

“So you have sent troops to investigate?”

Regarding this question, Kureto nodded affirmatively and said.

“Since yesterday morning, we have sent out 17 troops. But they were all completely wiped out. So I have called you all.”

“Eh?”

Guren narrowed his eyes.

In other words, they were all going to be dispatched together, an order from the frontlines of the secret fierce war happening in Japan.

Mito and Goshi looked at each other.

“Then, you’re saying that you want us to be sacrificed——”

Kureto interrupted.

“Quite the contrary. I believe that incompetent men were unable to do anything. So that’s why I’m sending out a team of talented people to go investigate.”

“……”

Hearing this, Mito and the others became silent. *No, maybe because they couldn’t believe that someone from the Hiiragi House would say such glowing words about them, they were too happy to say anything.*

Then, Shinya spoke.

“What is this? I feel like I’ve been forced to do something to troublesome…… Another cup of tea then.”

Kureto heard that and laughed.

“Then if I refill your cup, would that be settled? You can drink as much as you want.”

“Forget about it.”

Guren asked.

“So when do we start this mission? Immediately?”

“Yes, that’s right. Two hours from now, four troops will invade the northeast part of the zoo. But that is a decoy. You will use the confusion to sneak in.”

Guren looked at the paper again. He looked through each photo and placed them on the table.

Kureto said.

“You can take these. Remember to destroy after you’re finished.”

But Guren replied.

“No need. I’ve already memorised them.”

Hearing this, Mito and Goshi turned their heads, surprised. But Guren ignored them and continued.

“Two hours from now, right? According to the photos, it looks like we’ll sneak in from the south since that’s the weakest point. Then, who should lead?”

Kureto looked at them and said.

“You decide. As long as I get the results, I don’t mind.”

Guren lowered his head and looked at Shinya and asked.

“What do you think?”

“Guren is fine with me. Since your subordinates only listen to you. Goshi, Mito, are you alright with this?”

Faced with this suggestion, the two of their voiced their opinion.

“Whatever Shinya-sama says is fine.”

“Of course, we have objections.”

It was decided then.

Guren would lead this group.

“Then, in fifteen minutes, we’ll start planning——”

Kureto interrupted him.

“You can use meeting room 302 on the third floor. If you can return alive, then that room is all yours. Alright, and Guren……”

“What?”

“My promise to you…..”

Saying this, Kureto took out a Japanese sword from under the desk and threw it over.

Guren caught it with his hand.

“《Hakushi》*. It’s a Demon Blade, but you should be able to use it.”

Hearing Kureto’s words, Guren lowered his head and examined the sword he held.

《Hakushi》——*I’ve heard of this name. It is said that this blade has cut down thousands of*

demons and yet it has never been turned, it is a blade that has a strange legend accompanying it.

Guren took it out from its scabbard. The sword trembles from the curse that is released, a shrill voice that filled the room with endless despair. Guren's mind was filled with the desire to kill.

"This really is a Demon Blade."

After Guren spoke, Sanjuu Aoi who was standing next to Kureto immediately stood on guard. She narrowed her eyes and have Guren a death glare.

But Kureto spoke.

"Aoi. Don't act. He is not an opponent you can beat."

"But……"

"Besides, he is no longer a threat. He is totally subservient to me. Am I right, Guren? Right now you have a weapon in your hands and I am unarmed. If you want to kill me, then this is your perfect opportunity."

"……"

"But yet you still won't make a move. Why? It's because you know your own limits. You have ambition. Ambition deep in your heart. But you always just keep pretending. If you're not pretending, then you won't be able to restrain yourself. In fact, you know yourself the best. This is an ambition that can never be fulfilled. The difference in power between the Ichinose House and Hiiragi House is insurmountable. Am I right, Ichinose Guren?"

Guren put the sword back in its scabbard and said.

"If I said yes, would that make you happy?"

Kureto replied him.

"Ah yes."

"Then, yes it is. Go and be happy."

"But the happy one should be you right? How's the weapon?"

"Hmph. Your tribute to your subordinates isn't that bad after all."

"Haha, you're very interesting indeed."

Hearing Kureto repeat his meaningless words, Guren ignored him and turned around and left the room.

Then Kureto said.

"Alright, everyone else can also go. So this is my order. I'm just waiting for the results now."

At this point, the end of Kureto's summon.

◆

302 Meeting Room wasn't actually any different to an ordinary classroom.

In the empty meeting room, there were Shigure, Mito, Goshi, Shinya, and Guren, the five of them. Sayuri went out to buy some snacks.

Mito looked like she was talking to her family, standing on the balcony.

The sound of her talking on the phone could be heard.

"Mm, Mm, yes. It is Kureto-sama's direct order. But, this secret mission…… Yum. Probably it's going to be dangerous. But…… mm. I will do my best. If I get use this opportunity to get recognition, it would be good for the future status of the Juujou House……"

That was the content of her conversation.

Goshi looked at Mito's direction for a while before turning back and said.

"Looks like we've been forced into this, eh? Seventeen troops wiped out, aren't they sending us to our deaths?"

Guren laughed and said.

"Is it alright if you don't call your family to let them know?"

"Haha, I don't have a good relationship with my family. I have a younger brother, he's very talented. And a year younger than me……"

"Overshadowed by him?"

"Ah yes, that's right. So even if I die, no one would care. But having said that, if they knew I was part of this new squad that Kureto-sama created, I bet they would be very proud."

Saying this, Goshi looked over at Mito at the balcony and said.

"But if I really die, then there would be no meaning."

I don't understand why they are so eager to die, but looking at Goshi and Mito, they look quite nervous about this mission.

"I'm back~"

It was Sayuri's voice. She bought paper cups and a bottle of oolong tea and a few snacks as well.

Goshi then laughed,

"Oh, Sayuri, aren't you attentive? Potato chips are my favourite!"

But Sayuri firmly ignored him and asked Guren.

"Guren-sama, what would you like?"

"I'm not eating."

"Eh~!"

Then Mito hung up and returned to the meeting room. Seeing Sayuri, she said,

“Ah, thanks for this. Sorry to trouble you in getting these, Sayuri-san.”

“It’s alright.”

“Ah, Yukimi Shigure-san. My father sends his regards. I’ve said before that I mentioned your strength to him and he was very interested in you…… You really don’t want to come by to my place?”

Then, Shigure replied with one sentence.

“I’m not interested.”

And that was it.

Mito unexpectedly nodded quite easily,

“Yup, I thought so…… Turns out that your master is stronger than me. Though his attitude is pretty crappy.”

She said as she looked at Guren.

But Guren didn’t bother paying attention to them and started.

“Alright, let’s talk about our mission. Having said that, there is nothing much left to say. After all, there isn’t much information. The target place is Ueno Zoo. 《Hyakuya Church》has hidden something there. Our job is to go in and investigate. 《Mikado no Oni》has sent out 17 troops, but they were all eliminated. In other words, Ueno Zoo is enemy territory. But, if every one of the Hiiragi troops sent were all hopeless, then they might not have known they were being poisoned and infected the other troops when they went back and forth——if this is the case, then maybe there aren’t any enemies there——”

Shinya laughed.

“Ah, but that doesn’t make sense. With or without poison, they would have already finished their investigations.”

“You’re also right. So looks like there are enemies in there. There are people who would die for this secret. This also means that we have to sneak in instead.”

What is this secret research that must be kept hidden anyway? So, what is this secret research that they are desperately protecting?

No matter what it is, as long as we can seize it, then it would be a very powerful force. Because 《Hyakuya Church》 *had stolen the secret research that* 『Mikado no Oni』 *had been protecting. Its value is priceless.*

Mito spoke.

“…… Ah about just now, you’ve just been talking about things that have already been said, are you sure you are able to command this mission……?”

Shigure interrupted her.

“Please don’t interrupt. Guren-sama has from young been through many dangerous situations……”

“Be quiet, Shigure. A barking dog never bites, haven’t you heard of this saying?”

“Uh……”

Shigure kept silent.

Then, Guren looked at Mito and Goshi and said.

“Actually there is no need to talk about the information. But there is something I want to try.”

“What is it?”

As Mito spoke, Guren replied.

“Before the mission, I want to test your strength. In short, I want you to deal with my sword. I want to see your reaction speed.”

In that moment, Guren took the sword out from the scabbard around his waist.

Mito widened her eyes. Goshi was slower than Mito but still reacted.

But only so far. Guren’s sword stopped just before touching Mito’s nape.

“Ah, uh……”

Mito looked annoyingly at Guren.

“Can’t, can’t believe you attacked unexpectedly, you’re really too despicable……”

Guren interrupted her and said.

“You’re an idiot. If someone attacked you in battle, would they warn you beforehand?”

“…… Uhhh.”

“But, I roughly know your reaction speed. I will use this as a benchmark to give out orders.”

In that regard, Goshi looked a little hesitant. It was obvious that the atmosphere in the meeting room had changed.

But Guren only continued.

“It’s alright, Goshi. From the sorcery selection exams, I could tell that you’re better at spells and curses than physical strength.”

Goshi stopped his magic that he had already started.

“You could see through my illusion——”

“Your skill is pretty good. It should be very useful when we sneak in. In addition, before Mito infiltrates, you can cast spells to increase physical acceleration. From the start to the end of the mission. If we don’t have this, then it would be useless and we would die immediately.

At this moment, Shinya who was sitting back at the back spoke.

“How about me? Are you going to test me?”

Guren replied.

“If you end up dead, then you’ll be the laughing stock of the great noble Hiiragi House.”

“Ehh, that’s mean.”

Guren ignored him and looked at the clock on the wall.

It was already 9:40.

“…… From here to Ueno.”

Suddenly, the meeting room doors opened.

The one who came in was Sanguu Aoi.

Aoi spoke.

“The school will send a helicopter, so don’t worry about the time. In addition, I have also brought the『Mikado no Oni』special battle uniform. This uniform is resistant to some spells and it is also charged with magic. Please make use of it.”

Saying this, she placed the six uniforms she was holding at the entrance of the room.

Just as she was preparing to leave, Guren called out.

“Wait.”

“What do you want?”

Aoi turned around.

Guren said to her.

“A covert mission and you want us to use helicopters? Are you idiots? We will go by car. Also, prepare six sets of casual clothes. We will change into these when we’re inside.”

Aoi narrowed her eyes and nodded.

“Certainly. I will immediately prepare for this. Site of departure?”

“Park the cars at the school entrance. Two of them.”

Aoi nodded her head.

“I will assign a driver and disguise it as a high speed bus which would be able to bypass the traffic congestion. May I ask what time you would like to reach the target destination before start of the mission?”

“Fifteen minutes before. Stop about one kilometre before the destination.”

“Yes. I will immediately go prepare. You can set out in five minutes.”

Aoi turned around and left.

Guren asked the people in front of him.

“Is that alright?”

Everyone silently agreed.

After everyone's confirmation,

"Then, our war starts now."

Guren gave his command.

*Literal translation of this kanji is "White Death".

Volume 2 Chapter 7 – Deathmatch at the Zoo

Ueno.

As the gateway to the north side of Tokyo, normally at this time on weekdays, there would be thousands of people walking through shoulder-to-shoulder.

The south side of the station was full of bustling streets.

On the west, there was a museum and art gallery, a zoo, and also a park with lots of facilities.

But right now, there was not a single soul.

The silence was eerie.

Guren looked at the trees at the park, such greenery in the city could be described as rare. He listened to the leaves swaying in the wind, and said to himself softly.

"…… There isn't even the sound of birds. Have they all escaped, or maybe they have all died?"

Guren thought of the word 'poison' that he had heard on the news. That was the reason why the park was in lock down. He heard that though the trains passed through Ueno, they didn't stop at the station.

Then, he heard a voice.

“Oi you guys, if you sneak a peek, I’ll kill you!”

It was Mito’s voice.

Guren turned around. In the park, the girls were using the big tree as a cover and were changing into the Hiiragi House battle uniforms.

“Really, you’re so slow.”

Guren complained softly while checking his own battle uniform.

The battle uniform was black, like the old Japanese army uniforms.

The texture had a special thread woven in to ward off curses. It was also lined with various spells. The waistband also had a few weapons hidden in it.

Guren examined the equipment and said in a small voice.

“…… Ah, the Hiiragi House equipment aren’t bad.”

From behind, Goshi spoke.

“…… But, there isn’t a single soul here, it really is a bit scary.”

Guren turned around to where Goshi and Shinya were standing. The both of them had already changed into their battle uniform.

Shinya asked Goshi.

“Have you been here before?”

“Eh, Shinya-sama, you live in Tokyo, don’t tell me you’ve never been here before?”

“Ah, I have no interest in pandas.”

“I don’t think that’s the issue. They also have lions here, don’t they?”

“Ahaha. Then, if we make it out today, I’ll go have a look.”

Guren ignored the silly conversation between them and examined his surroundings.

Even though he had already scouted the place for surveillance cameras before changing, he wanted to confirm whether he didn’t overlook something like an energy barrier.

“Oi, if I had known that you girls change so slowly, I would have just let you enter directly in casual clothing……”

Guren still hadn’t finished what he was saying, suddenly Mito came out from behind the tree.

“Already finished! Stop complaining over a few minutes! If you’re like this, no wonder no girls are attracted to you!”

Dressed in the battle uniform, Mito’s comeback was not at all polite.

Sayuri and Shigure also came out dressed in the battle uniform.

“Deep apologies for making you wait.”

Guren interrupted her words.

“Shigure, it’s alright. Preparing hidden weapons takes more time. The problem is those other two idiots.”

Finishing, he looked at Mito and Sayuri.

Sayuri had a look on her face that said “isn’t this nice?” and excitedly checking out each side.

“Ah ah, indeed this is the Hiiragi House battle uniform, it looks really cute! Does, does it look cute on me?”

“You’re so annoying.”

“Ehhhh!! But, Guren-sama in uniform is really good looking! My heart is beating so fast!

Right, Yuki-chan?”

Sayuri frankly admitted to Shigure.

Then from the side,

“Who did you say was an idiot, an idiot!?”

Mito yelled out.

With this attitude, are these guys really ready to head into a mission with a very low chance of surviving? Guren wondered.

“But, according to the intel, the first troops that had been killed off went through this area……”

Hearing what Guren said, Mito put on a serious face and examined her surroundings.

“But, it feels really bad here. Forget about humans, I can’t even sense the presence of animals.”

Then, Shinya said.

“I remember from the aerial photos that there was a crater in the centre of the explosion ——”

“Let’s head northeast. According to my estimation, there should be several layers of protective barriers nearby. If we step into the barrier, the enemies will be alerted.”

Sayuri asked.

“If we relied on our abilities, would we be able to detect the barriers?”

Goshi took out something that looked like a match with a spell attached and said.

“Besides illusion spells, I’m also good at detecting curses——”

Guren put out his hand to stop him.

“No need. Anyway, once we go in, we will be exposed. But, right now before we are able to ascertain what the 《Hyakuya Church》 is hiding, we can’t go back. So we just need to rush in all at once.”

“We have no plan?”

Shinya seemed a little surprised.

Guren replied.

“I think the more we do, the more likely the enemy will be able to catch us. Before we are detected by the enemies, we need to confirm the location of the mission, then we rush in at once.”

Hearing this, Mito said.

“This sounds like a very stupid strategy!”

“Is it?”

“Yes!”

“Then what do you propose? In this situation where we have zero intelligence, we are in a bind. Instead of thinking what should be the plan, the plan should just be this, either we come up with stupid war plan using the ideal strategies, or we just deftly cut down any enemies in front of us. As long we don’t die, we can make it out alive.”

Guren said as he looked at the direction of the trees in the park.

The direction of the zoo.

Mito standing behind Guren said uneasily.

“Guren.”

“……”

“Have you done this type of mission before? You seem very accustomed to this……”

At her question, Guren formed a smile on his face. He wanted to answer of course.

Because from the day he entered the Hiiragi House school, he was constantly accompanied by death, he never knew when he would have to fight in any situation.

But forget it, it wouldn’t make sense for me to say something like that at this moment.

So he ignored Mito’s questions, his hand on his sword on his waist. Then with the other hand, he took out a bullet-proof, anti-shock, anti-magnetic, anti-curse pocket watch from his pocket and opened it.

Before they left the school, everyone had adjusted the time to match.

Right now, the seconds hand was turning.

11:29:20.

Thirty seconds.

Forty seconds.

“It’s time. The troops from the Hiiragi House will be launching their attack from the northeast. At the same time, we will attack.”

Everyone was obviously nervous.

Guren continued.

“As the team leader, I only have one order. Listen well. Only this one point to keep in mind. Don’t think about anything else. Doing that is useless.”

Fifty seconds.

“My order is——you absolutely cannot die.”

Fifty-five seconds.

“Alright, then……”

Suddenly, a deafening explosion.

The sky from the northeast.

It sounded as if a helicopter was shot down.

However, it was not possible to see the situation on the other side.

Guren’s voice was soft, but everyone could hear it clearly,

“Mission start.”

Then everyone bolted out.

◆

The zoo immediately appeared in front.

Not sure whether it’s because they have taken down the barrier. Or whether we’ve already been detected from our position.

But, Guren and his team did not stop.

They climbed up the fence of the zoo.

The zoo also did not have a presence of life.

Only a numbing, pungent stench.

“…… What is this?”

Mito asked.

Shinya replied in a low voice.

“It’s the smell of blood.”

In front of them were a few monkey cages. But they were all empty. Only the stains of fresh red blood. The bars appeared to be twisted from outside, completely unable to hold in the monkeys.

But the monkeys that were supposed to be kept inside the cage were already long gone.

Goshi spoke.

“What on earth happened here?”

This sort of situation, who could have known what happened? That was why they were here to investigate.

Guren thought silently about the path leading to the centre of the explosion as seen in the aerial photographs. The centre of the explosion was at the centre of the zoo’s east area.

If we start from here, we would have to go through where the animal enclosures would usually be closed to public, then we would go around from the north or the south.

Alternatively, if we don't worry about the enclosures, then we could just head straight.

"……"

He didn't even need to consider.

He set out on the shortest route.

"Let's go."

Guren ran ahead to take the lead.

After passing through the bloody cages, there was an elephant enclosure. Then after passing through the bear enclosure, they should have reached their destination.

No matter which enclosure they passed through, there was no animal in sight.

Only blood.

A lot of blood.

But there were no bodies.

No trace of life in the air.

As though you could not believe that this was a zoo during the day time because of the eerie silence.

Even though there should be an ongoing battle at the northeast side, apart from the initial blast, there was no other sound of battle.

Have they all been defeated? Or a protective barrier had been set up to cut off the sound?

Regardless of the situation, we're running out of time.

Past the bear enclosure, Guren and his team had arrived at the target destination.

Where the crane and tiger enclosures were.

The depth and width of the crater, even from the aerial photo it could be seen that it was not normal. But how this formation came about, there was no way of knowing.

Guren looked towards the centre of the pit.

In the centre, he saw the first living animal.

A tiger.

Standing behind him, Sayuri,

"Ah, it's a tiger."

And flatly stated the fact.

The tiger's body was huge, normally seeing a huge tiger like that out of its enclosure would scare the living daylights out of people——but right now, these weren't normal people.

The tiger raised its head and looked at them. Its huge teeth stained with blood.

Goshi spoke.

“Did it eat all the other animals?”

Guren didn’t think this was possible. *We didn’t see a single animal since we came. There should have been a dozen monkeys, a few elephants, and also cranes, bears, and even lions. It’s not possible that a single lion ate all the animals.*

But, I also can’t ignore the size of its body.

Shinya asked in a calm voice.

“So, what do we do next?”

Then, the tiger let out a roar. A noise so loud that it would have made people shiver.

But, no one was bothered.

Shigure said.

“If this was where the 《Hyakuya Church》 was doing experiments, then they should also have some relevant equipment around. We’ll go have a look.”

Guwaaaah! The tiger let out another threatening roar. As though it was scared of these figures.

Guren stared at the tiger’s pupils.

Shinya asked him.

“Oi, Guren. Your order? Aren’t you the leader?”

But, Guren did not reply.

He only continued staring at the tiger——

“That tiger——is it alive?”

And asked this question.

“Eh?”

Shinya stood next to him and looked at the tiger.

Guren also watched intently. The tiger’s pupils were white and lifeless.

Suddenly,

“Gugaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

Another roar, its tongue sticking out of its mouth. No, he had mistaken it for a tongue only for a second, then he suddenly realised it was a sharp tip, as though from a white blade.

When he realised, the blade was aiming towards Mito’s neck——

“Don’t you dare!”

Guren pulled out his sword.

He brandished his sword and used it to deflect. A resounding sound greeted them as the metal clashed. Even though the blade didn't hit Guren directly and he only cut it down, his wrists were numb from the attack.

It can be seen that this tiger——its body is something difficult to deal with. To be able to react to such an attack just now——

"Shinya, did you see it?"

"Maybe."

"Then, you and I are going to deal with it."

Mito opened her mouth.

"Wait, then what about us?"

"Cover us from behind. Sayuri, Shigure."

Two people immediately responded,

"Understood!"

At that moment when they spoke, Guren rushed out. As he ran, he planned to use his sword to cut it down again, then suddenly, that thing came out from the tiger's mouth again.

The tiger stared at him. The pupils were lifeless and cloudy white. A kunai aimed at its eyes came flying from behind.

Shigure's hidden weapon.

If the tiger is able to dodge the kunai and head in this direction, then I'll be able to cut it down. That was what Guren thought.

But, the tiger didn't react to the kunai at all. Its cloudy white eyes was stabbed. But there was no blood.

Maybe it doesn't feel pain. But this was what Guren had expected.

"No matter what you are, I'll take your head!"

Guren finished and raised his sword again.

"Guh!"

The tiger raised its paw against Guren.

But Guren did not dodge or hide.

Because Shinya had already stuck a talisman on its paw.

"Explode!"

The incantation came from behind. A spell that explodes. The tiger lost its paw.

At this time, Guren jumped up and pointed his blade upwards. Then stuck it into the tiger's neck. Halfway through he felt he hit against something hard, but he ignored the feeling and

continued to cut. The sword he received from Kureto could cut through anything.

The tiger's head flew out.

But there still wasn't a drop of blood.

But, even though there was no head on the body, there was still something strange coming out.

That white monster with artificial skin like plastic. There were many legs with the front of each leg like a sharp dagger.

The body was obviously bigger than a tiger. No, how could it even get into the tiger's body, it's more than five times the size of a tiger.

One of the legs came rushing out towards Guren who had just chopped off the head.

"Guh!"

Guren put up his sword to guard against the blow. The impact pressed him to the ground.

But the monster's attack did not stop. Another one of the legs aimed towards Guren who was losing his balance. To avoid being hit in the chest, Guren took a quick step to the side. But that was his limit, it had still pierced his shoulder.

"Guaah!"

The monster raised its foot again. This time, Guren was unable to dodge it.

He looked up as the monster was about to attack,

"Shit, to die like this….."

Then,

"This way!"

Mito yelled out. Guren was pulled back by an enormous force. His body was pulled up mid-air. He turned around twice before being let down.

Shinya and Mito returned. Their faces full of unimaginable shock, staring at the ominous monster in front of them.

"What, what on earth is that……"

Shinya said.

"Who knows? But we're definitely not able to defeat it. That attack that went through Guren's shoulder——that attack would have killed me."

A sharp stinging pain from the shoulders. Blood couldn't stop flowing out. *Without any treatment, I can't continue fighting. But, there is no place to handle this wound properly.*

"Guren-sama!"

Sayuri cried out. At the same time, she threw a few talismans at the monster. They all

exploded. For a few moments, there was sand scattered everywhere, obscuring the view.

At this time, Goshi started his illusion. He struck a few matches and entered the dust, fanning out hallucinogenic smoke while staying close to Guren.

“Oi, will your illusion work against it?”

Mito yelled.

“I don’t know! But it’s better than nothing!”

“Then just do it!”

Pop, pop, pop, Goshi clicked his fingers a few times. A method that worked on the difference between sound tones. It was really simple, but it made a powerful illusion.

It probably worked, it sounds like the monster on the other side is fighting something that isn’t there. Although it was not attacked in this direction, it could move very quickly, making it difficult to get close to.

Taking advantage of this, Shigure went over to Guren’s side. As she looked at his shoulder, she had a look of concern on her face.

“Gu, Guren-sama…… You need to get this treated straight away……”

“Cauterise it. Burning it will stop the bleeding. There isn’t any time to deal with this.”

Guren said while ignoring his wounds and took out a few talismans from his chest. He used a knife to string the talismans together, then smeared the blood from his bleeding shoulder on them.

Shinya realised what he was doing and said.

“…… Oh this is the Dead Blood sword? Well~ with your current condition, isn’t it impossible……?”

Shinya is right.

《Shikkeju》*. *This is a forbidden curse that will result in death if it fails. And the failure rate is very high.*

It turns one’s own blood into poison. It will allow the user to Blood Blade to harm the target chanting the incantation nine times within five minutes, the poison will then work its way into the enemy and cause certain death——that was how the curse worked.

But, if within five minutes, the opponent isn’t killed, then the curse will backfire and the user will bleed to death.

This curse has two sides——rather, it is actually a useless spell. Normally, using the sword to cut down nine times would be enough to kill the enemy. That being the case, why is it necessary to take such a high risk and apply this unnecessary curse?

It is said that this curse was developed to use it against enemies would couldn’t be killed by a sword.

Shinya spoke.

“In essence, it won’t work. I remembered that this was created to fight against the vampires? But, it wasn’t practical because to kill these vampires who surpass human abilities is just not realistic.”

“……”

“But, this is also the same, Guren. Retreat. If we stay here, we will all die.”

Guren looked up at Shinya.

Shinya’s assessment is right.

Now is the time to retreat. If you cherish life, that is. Now, if you don’t wish to die, then you should run away.

But Guren said.

“…… All of you leave. I will buy some time……”

At this point, Shigure put a talisman on Guren’s shoulder. The spell instantly burned up. The wound from the burn stopped the bleeding. Guren almost cried out in pain, but resisted.

Sayuri ran to his side.

“Guren-sama, let’s retreat. We have already seen what the enemy is like. If we report this back, I’m sure the Hiiragi House will understand.”

She’s right. After all, all the other troops didn’t survive. Perhaps we can save some face even if we just bring back this report.

“……”

But, what’s the use of that?

The Hiiragi House has already managed to get a lot of intelligence.

《Hyakuya Church》*’s research had already been disrupted, it’s over.*

Then, what about the Ichinose House?

Even disregarding this monster, we still haven’t been able to get the information about the experiments《Hyakuya Church》*have been running. The day Ichinose House reigns supreme, will it come?*

Guren thought as he looked at the dust settling.

Then at that moment, a watershed.

From my childhood past, the desire for power grew from inside my own heart. Has it always been there, or was it just childish desire?

“……”

Guren prepared his sword.

“Oi, Guren, don’t joke around.”

Shinya tried to persuade Guren, but he ignored him.

I am going to kill this monster.

And return to the Ichinose House.

This way, the Ichinose House would be able to get the information that the《Hyakuya Church》 *were so willing to die for*.

If I’m serious,

“I’m serious……”

I should be able to succeed.

Kill this monster. And also kill Mito and Goshi who will be witnessing it. Then pretend to be killed off and destroyed.

I shouldn’t be suspected.

Even the other troops didn’t make it back alive. Then, if we don’t make it back alive, it shouldn’t be a problem.

So,

“……”

I must make my move.

Kill that monster.

Kill Mito.

Kill Goshi.

Then, gain strength.

“Hang on Guren. Don’t do such a stupid thing when you’re hurt this badly! Forget it, let’s retreat.”

Mito said.

“That’s right. My illusion is fast disappearing. Our position is going to be exposed. Let’s go.”

Goshi also said.

Guren looked at them both.

Mito with her “so you’ve finally listened” expression smiled and said.

“Alright, let’s go. This time I’m going to save you! Now!”

She said as she held out a hand towards Guren.

Guren silently,

"……"

He took the sword handle. *It's so easy to kill her. Just one swing would be enough. She wouldn't be able to react or hide in time. They are stupid enough to fully trust someone from the Ichinose House.*

Shinya realised what was going on. He looked at Guren. With his cold stare at Guren's hand on his sword, then lazily,

"Ah ah, I see. So there is still this choice."

Shinya had figured out Guren's thinking.

Shinya didn't stop Guren. *No, he won't stop me.*

If I do not use this opportunity, I will not have another chance to deal a heavy blow to the Hiiragi House like this again.

So If I'm serious.

If I really want to get serious about gaining power——

"I……"

Then, Mito's hand stretched out and touched Guren's arm that was holding the sword.

"Alright, keep your weapon….."

Guren brushed her hand away,

"…… Don't touch me. I understand. Let's retreat for now."

Guren said as he applied the《Shikkeju》.

Shinya then let out a smile.

Mito then smiled happily,

"I'm glad that I finally got through to you. Alright, let's head off."

Guren agreed, nodding.

"Ah~~ what is this? Don't tell me you're all really running off?"

A girl's voice.

The moment Guren thought that, Mito was already hit unconscious from behind. Not only her, but Goshi, Sayuri, and Shigure all fell to the ground by a surprise attack.

Only Shinya was able to react to the attack in time.

"Damn, what….."

However, he didn't finish his words.

A pair of slender female hands wrapped around Shinya's neck. As he desperately attempted to break free by grabbing onto the hands, he asked.

“…… Mahiru, why…… are you…… doing this? What on earth….. are you thinking?”

Behind him was Mahiru.

Hiiragi Mahiru.

Rare grey hair. Big eyes. On her beautiful face, a confident smile.

She was still wearing her sailor uniform from First Shibuya High School. Even though she had abandoned the Hiiragi family, she was still wearing the school uniform and carrying a Japanese sword on her waist.

Mahiru spoke.

“Don’t resist, Shinya. What would happen if I accidentally killed you?”

“Guh…… You, you better explain yourself. I, I….. for your power……”

But, Mahiru smiled as she spoke.

“What a pity. This is not enough. Alright, go sleep then.”

Then, suddenly Mahiru’s grip tightened and Shinya lost consciousness. His whole lifeless body just fell to the ground.

Guren looked at this and said to Mahiru.

“Hey, I thought you said that we won’t be meeting before the world ends?”

Mahiru laughed at Guren.

“Aren’t you happy to see me?”

“No.”

“Aha. But I’m happy to see you….. But, I didn’t come here to see you.”

“What do you mean?”

Mahiru then said.

“I came to see you. But I still have something important to do here.”

Guren examined his surroundings. *Goshi had already lost consciousness, but his illusion is still working. On the other side of the smokescreen that Sayuri made, the monster is still fighting an invisible enemy. But the illusion is going to wear off soon. If the user is unconscious, then the illusion will rapidly disappear.*

Guren looked at the direction of the monster and said.

“Oh well. You’re one of 《Hyakuya Church》’s comrades, right. Now that the 《Hyakuya Church》experiments have failed, you’re here to wipe their ass?”

Hearing that, Mahiru looked strangely at Guren and said.

“I’m a 《Hyakuya Church》 comrade? That’s strange. My messenger……”

“You mean Shinoa?”

Guren said the name of the girl claiming to be Mahiru’s younger sister.

Mahiru nodded.

“Yup, Shinoa was supposed to help me pass on a message.”

“I heard you’re planning to betray the 《Hyakuya Church》?”

“Yup.”

“Which side are you really on?”

“Ahaha.”

“What is your purpose?”

Mahiru kept laughing. She looked so happy. Cute, yet smiling flirtatiously. She stretched out

her delicate hand and gently touched Guren's chest, stroked his neck, then caressed his burnt wound lovingly.

"Where I belong is the same as where you belong, Guren. No one else will get in our way ——to spend time with your loved one freely, to be able to get to a place to gain power so no one would be able to get in your way again."

Guren looked at Mahiru's face and asked.

"Where is that?"

"It's here."

"Here, where?"

Mahiru pressed down on Guren's wound mercilessly. Pain from the nervous spreading throughout his body, but Guren didn't care. She also touched her own chest and pressed down.

"Deep down inside is the nest of the arrogant and wild ghost, that's where I belong. That's also the same for you right, Guren?"

"……"

"But, that's still not enough. If you want to fall to the depths of where I am, you're still far away from it."

Mahiru pressed against Guren's wound with more force.

"Why didn't you kill the Juujou girl just now, and the playboy from Goshi House? You should have killed them."

She dung her fingernails into Guren's wound.

"To release a little more hatred. To become more insane. An《Oni》's favourite thing is human desires. You should let the 《Oni》 choose you……"

Suddenly, Guren grabbed her hand.

"Ah……"

To be touched by Guren, Mahiru had a look of enjoyment on her face.

Guren ignored her joy and said.

"My path, and your path……"

"Are the same, Guren."

Mahiru interrupted him.

"Everyone is the same. We all die. Humans die so easily. What's the meaning of life? Is there no meaning? This is such a stupid question, time is so fleeting that it's unreasonable to ask. So how should we spend this time? Which path should we choose? Aha, hahaha. Besides, the end is always death. You want to talk to me about the meaning of the path you've chosen?"

Saying this, Mahiru drew out her sword from her waist.

The blade was black. It seemed to distort the space around it, an ominous kind of black.

It's said that it's impossible to succeed. To seal the curse 《Kiju》 *into the* 《Shinki》 *for research to develop weapons.*

Mahiru stuck her sword into the ground in front of Guren.

Suddenly, radiating a few metres from where the sword was struck, the ground turned black. A curse overflowing from the sword. Guren's feet touched the curse. The curse immediately wanted to violate Guren's body and mind.

"……"

Guren silently recited some curses in his head to keep the black curse at bay.

Then Mahiru spoke again.

"Ah, let me tell you first. You can't stop the curse from the blade just using『Resistance Curses』!"

Guren glared at Mahiru.

"Why do you want me to touch this sword?"

"Because you want more power right?"

"I won't obey you. And I won't let anyone control——"

"No, Guren. It's not me who's controlling you. The decision rests with you. And yet you're not resistant. Your lust for power. Your thirst for power. Because you and I are the same, living in the secluded cave deep down in the depths."

Then at this time,

"Guwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!"

A roaring voice.

It was the monster wriggling free. The illusion was gone.

Mahiru looked at the monster and laughed.

"Ahaha. Look, in the end you don't have a choice. If you don't take the sword, then you can't win against the beast that had been implanted with the gene of the 《Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse》. If you lose, it means death. And all those unconscious young comrades of yours will also die."

Ton, ton, Mahiru tapped her feet gently on the ground and smiled.

"As for me, I'll be watching you from here, Guren. To see what choice you make. Do you really want power? Or are your wild ambitions just childish dreams?"

"……"

“Even though I already know the outcome. You will succumb. Succumb to power and fall, because you and I are the same. So that’s why I like you, Guren. I really like you! Ahaha.”

So Mahiru said.

Then, the beast with the 《Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse》 gene, which Guren had no idea what it meant, implanted into it became aware of them.

I’m afraid that if I’m to defeat it, how I am now is not enough. How that thing’s body is structured, what spells are effective against it, what are its weaknesses, I don’t know a damn thing, but even just having a glimpse of its physical ability, I’m already dead meat.

If I were to die, then the rest won’t be able to survive.

Sayuri, Shigure, Goshi, Mito, Shinya.

That guy who collapsed like an idiot will also die.

“Right now I need the power……”

Guren lowered his head and looked at the black sword on the ground, hand stretched out towards the handle.

Standing next to him, Mahiru spoke.

“That’s right. Quickly gain its power. Give up being a human….. No, no you can’t, Guren, stop…… If you do this, there is no coming back…… Shut up, shut up! Right now it’s the most exciting moment! I have to stop!”

Suddenly, Mahiru pounded her own chest.

And stopped herself from talking.

There seems to be two opposing personalities inside her body, just like that time during the April attack.

“Which one of you is the real Mahiru?

Hearing this, Mahiru smiled and said.

“…… What has that got to do with your choice?”

A smile formed on Guren’s face and he replied.

“Nothing.”

He pulled out the sword from the ground.

In an instant.

Guren felt a strong influx of power coming from the sword in his body. A power that had never entered him before.

Killing.

Violation.

Destruction.

Destroy everything.

My mind is being taken over by this strong urge.

Anger and despair.

Happiness and sadness.

Then everything is mixed together, darkness, darkness, engulfing everything.

Mahiru was right. There was no time to chant the enhancing spells of 『Resistance Curses』.

The most important part of the body——the hatred in the deepest pits of the soul is expanding, and in that centre, an《Oni》*appears.*

I say an《Oni》*, but its appearance is indistinguishable from humans. Terribly beautiful with a human-like androgynous appearance.*

Male or female, I can't tell.

But I know this is an《Oni》.

A《Shinki》 *type*《Oni》.

The《Oni》finally spoke.

《Humans are so pitiful. Always seeking power.》

"……"

《But your decision is wrong, Guren. This is a place you shouldn't step foot in.》

"……"

《But, your desire, your lust for power has driven you to this insane situation. For me, to be summoned like this is actually quite a happy thing……》

"……"

《So you want power?》

Guren replied to this answer.

"I do."

《Even if you lose something?》

"Ah."

《You have no need for your comrades. This is one of Ashura's paths. What is it? Sayuri? Shigure? Kill them first. That will be your first task. Kill them both first.》

"…… Ah."

《Then, release it. Release the〈Kyouki〉* inside your soul, Ichinose Guren. And you will

gain power!》

Then suddenly, all was quiet.

Guren slowly became conscious again.

The chimera appeared in front of his eyes, raising three legs to kill Guren. *If it was me from before, I don't think I could have handled it.*

But,

"Shut up!"

Guren brandished the sword with the 《Oni》 inside.

In one instance, the chimera's body was cut in half. Furthermore, at that moment, the scenery behind the chimera had also been cut in half.

"Aha, this is really quite good."

From behind was Mahiru's happy voice.

Guren turned and looked at Mahiru.

She was still laughing,

"Fufu, fu, you also wish to kill me? You can't suppress the urge to destroy everything, eh?"

"……"

"And you also want to kill all your comrades here. Pull the entrails out from the boy, violate the girls, cut all their heads off. That's the problem with this weapon…… your mental state will obviously worsen due to being possessed by the 《Oni》."

Guren raised his sword. Then looked at the people on the ground. He looked at Sayuri and Shigure. He wanted to kill both his subordinates.

Mahiru continued.

"But, that doesn't matter, Guren. First, kill the five of them to temporarily ease the urge. Then, we can go explore how to use the 《Kiju Equipment》. You and I together, we will definitely improve this power. This way we can forge ahead. No one will be able to stop us."

She paused for a while before continuing.

"But, ah, you have to kill them first. Then we can move on."

Hearing this, Guren held the sword tightly.

Kill Shigure.

Kill Sayuri.

Kill Mito.

Kil Goshi.

Kill Shinya.

I know that by killing them, I will feel an immense joy rushing out from my heart. Happiness that would be able to change the world. The things that have tied me down, common sense and worldly things, brotherhood and love, these things would all collapse, leaving only the true self, leaving the pure desire of the pursuit of power.

Therefore,

“Ah ah, that’s right. This is power.”

Guren muttered to himself.

“That’s right, Guren. It’s something that you and I have been chasing.”

Mahiru said so.

Guren turned to watch Mahiru. *Even she wanted to violate and kill——this thought is constantly there. But first, I have to kill the two easiest to kill. The two subordinates. Two of my own who have always been following me.*

From inside Guren’s soul, the 《Oni》 spoke.

《Go and cross that line.》

That line.

What is that line? Guren thought to himself. *Is it the line that makes me human? To tell me to give up on my humanity, to become Ashura?*

But, this is necessary.

To defeat the Hiiragi family.

To gain strength and freedom.

In short,

《Destroy all of it.》

Hearing 《Oni》’s command, Guren raised his sword. The target was Sayuri’s head.

But at the same time, Guren also brandished the Demon Blade that Kureto gave him《Hakushi》with his left hand. But compared to Mahiru’s 《Oni》sword, it could be said that 《Hakushi》 could not be really regarded as a Demon Blade.

But, still he raised it.

The blade edge of 《Hakushi》 was aimed at the right hand that was going to cut down Sayuri. The cut of 《Hakushi》was sharp and silent, even pain couldn’t be felt though Guren’s right arm was chopped off.

“What!?”

From out of nowhere, Mahiru screamed from behind.

“Wait, what are you doing!?”

But it was too late. Guren’s right hand which was holding the 《Kiju》blade flew away. Fresh blood was spurting out from his wound. Guren used his left hand to suppress it.

“…… Uh, ah…… ahh shit. My mind’s finally cleared.”

Guren groaned and fell to his knees. *I don’t have enough blood. The bleeding is too excessive.*

“Shigure, Sayuri, quick wake up, idiots! We’re retreating!”

Guren yelled at his subordinates.

But the two of them were still unconscious.

Mahiru ran over, panicking. She took Guren’s cut arm and tightly pressed it on the bleeding arm, not sure what she was planning.

“Hur… hurry…… Take advantage of the regenerative capabilities of the《Oni》, you might be able to reattach it!”

Indeed, after his hand was chopped off, his arm was beginning to give him a bad nausea, it looked like it was beginning to reattach itself. This sight looked nothing like a human arm.

“Impossible, impossible, it’s not bonding…… Please. Please, I beg you, even if it’s just the nerves……”

Tears ran down Mahiru’s face. Then she let out a roar.

“Why did you do this!?”

Tears were overflowing from her eyes. Even though it looked like she didn’t have any humanity left in her, she was still crying.

Kuren looked at her face closely and said.

“Hey, Mahiru.”

“……”

“Stop the《Kiju》research. This can’t go on.”

“……”

“We’re only idiots being controlled like puppets.”

“…… No.”

“Yes, we are! Think of another way. There must be another way to……”

“There isn’t!”

Mahiru let out another cry.

Even though she had rejected the idea of another way, she was vaguely aware that there was some truth to Guren’s words.

Guren looked at her and said.

“…… There is. Let me find it.”

“Liar! You can’t even do it.”

“It won’t be the same like last time.”

“Liar! Liar! All lies! Don’t just say these comforting words……”

Guren grabbed Mahiru’s shoulder with his trembling left hand.

And said.

“This time let me protect you. Let’s go together, Mahiru.”

Mahiru raised her head and looked at Guren. Her face full of tears. Her eyes flickering between fear and hope.

She said.

“If you want to protect me…… if you really want to protect me…… then come with me, Guren. Kill your subordinates, kill your comrades, and with me……”

Guren interrupted her.

“Don’t say anymore. You need to come with me.”

Hearing this, Mahiru smiled, confused. She was no longer crying.

“…… Aha, Guren. You’re always so cool.”

“……”

“If I was the type to be moved by your words, it’s so great to willingly chase after your girl. Being together with you will surely bring happiness.”

“If you think this way, then do it, Mahiru.”

But Mahiru stood up.

“I can’t, Guren. You must have realised. That was a childhood dream, ideal, joke. It’s not real.”

Mahiru took half a step back. In her hand was Guren’s 《Kiju》 sword that he had discarded.

Guren said.

“Right now I’m trying to make that joke a reality.”

“That’s why you were always a step too slow, Guren. What you’re chasing is but a childish dream.”

“Ha, haven’t you heard of the story of the tortoise and the hare? If you continue like this, you will be destroyed.”

Then Mahiru revealed an understanding smile.

“Before that, help me, Guren.”

“I want to help you. Throw away that sword and come to me.”

“Aha, you only know how to say such sweet words. But, you cannot use strength to solve the problem. Take away my sword and say ‘listen to me!’, being angry at me this way?”

“……”

“But, you can’t do it right now, can you? What a pity, I’m stronger than you. Because I’m the hare. The hare rushing into the destruction. That’s why I’m waiting for the tortoise king. Before I am destroyed, come save me, Guren.”

Saying this, she smiled then held onto Guren’s right hand. Guren felt something where his arm was cut.

“What?”

Guren looked at his right arm, shocked. It had already been attached. Black things crawling on the wound, the skin slowly healing.

Mahiru spoke.

“It’s reattached. But, don’t overwork yourself. It’s because there is still some remaining power of the 《Oni》, there won’t be a second time. Unless of course you pick up the sword again.”

“This power is not what humans should be using.”

Guren replied.

Hearing his words, Mahiru laughed happily, almost flirtatiously.

“AH, that’s right. You’re no longer human. Human’s arms can’t reattach after being cut off. Your soul already has a little bit of 《Oni》 mixed into it.”

“……”

“So in the end you will also perish. Just like me, the darkness will completely devour your heart. Ah ah, Guren. We won’t be able to leave each other. Let’s love each other and become 《Oni》 together.”

Even though she said that, Mahiru left his side. She looked at Guren lovingly.

“But that’s enough for today. Even though I want to give you a kiss, I still have things to do.”

So Mahiru ran to the other side.

She picked up one half of the chimera’s body that Guren had cut.

Then at this time, the other half of the chimera was picked up by another person.

“……”

No, not a person.

The appearance looked human, but obviously wasn’t a living thing.

Abnormal white skin. Full facial features. Pompous. Many decorations adorned his clothes, almost like a noble.

Long silver hair and blood-red eyes.

“Vampire!?”

Guren yelled out, shocked.

In that moment, Mahiru drew her sword from her waist.

At Mahiru’s action, the silver haired vampire also drew his sword from his waist. His blade was intriguing, almost looked like glass.

Then the glass sword and Mahiru’s sword clashed against each other.

From Mahiru’s sword was an intense oppressive urge to kill, radiating towards the vampire,

but,

“…… Heh. Humans have already come up with such technology to control the demons. Not bad, eh.”

The vampire smiled absentmindedly but took the attack easily.

Mahiru glared at the vampire and said.

“That uniform, you’re a noble?”

“Ah, you know something about vampires, eh? Yup yup. I’m Ferid Bathory, the Seventh Progenitor. But, for a mere human like you, it must not make sense.”

Then, the vampire claiming to be Ferid pulled out his sword.

And thrust.

“Guh!”

Mahiru was struggling to keep up. After five rounds——the fight between the two can only be seen this much.

But after that, it was impossible to distinguish. Mahiru was ready to escape to the back. But,

“Ah, are you running off?”

Saying this, Ferid kicked the side of Mahiru’s head. In that moment, with strength that could break someone’s neck, Mahiru’s body went flying.

“Okay, this is the end ~~♪”

Ferid spoke.

And raised his sword.

This time, Guren came rushing over. His right hand still not as agile, so he used his left hand and blocked the attack with Kureto’s Demon Sword. He managed to block just in time.

Ferid smiled.

“Farewell, human.”

And struck down his sword.

Guren’s sword was struck with unimaginable strength. Guren jumped back at the same time to soften the blow, but was unable to withstand the full impact.

The blade bore the brunt of the attack, the left hand holding the sword had a few bones. The impact of the sword also hit Guren’s body, causing a few broken bones. Guren’s body flew over, hitting Mahiru’s back. The two of them flew backwards about ten metres.

“Guh, ah…..”

Both of them tumbled onto the ground. *I can’t stand up. Even the slightest movement is difficult. The wound is too severe.*

"…… Guren…… are you still alive?"

From behind, Mahiru asked. Guren looked at her, realising her face was full of concern.

Guren said to her.

"Don't worry about me. You just keep looking in front. I can't handle another one of his attacks."

But, Mahiru frowned, unwillingly.

"The opponent isn't bothered by us at all……"

Guren looked over, Ferid indeed did not look bothered.

No, it's because he's a vampire, they have always been like that. To them, humans are just livestock so they do not come out in the open. They don't have any interest in the power struggle of humans above ground, they only live underground for eternity.

However,

"What are you doing here?"

Mahiru asked.

Hearing this, Ferid raised his head.

"Ehh? Strange, you're still alive? That's really good. Are you sure both of you are human?"

"Answer me. What are you doing here?"

Ferid replied.

"Nothing much, I only heard that humans were dabbling in research they shouldn't be dabbling in, so I came to investigate……"

Then he looked at his feed. The corpse of the chimera was lying there. He gave the corpse a kick. The chimera's corpse flew up in the air and landed on his shoulder.

"Oooh, how scary is this? You humans have always liked these sort of things. If you were to get your hands on this forbidden technique, then the world will surely end."

Ferid looked at Mahiru again.

"And also your sword, it's really a crazy thing. Human greed is so disgusting."

Mahiru held her sword and let out a nervous smile and said.

"So, you're here to punish the greedy humans?"

But Ferid laughed.

"Definitely not. I don't care for humans. You can just uglily fight amongst yourselves. We are not interested in livestock killing each other. But, to survive my sword attacks, I'm not sure whether you two can still be considered humans. Ah forget it, it doesn't really matter."

"……"

Then, Ferid easily turned around and left. *No, it's because there is such a big discrepancy between our powers, showing his back to us is not even a problem for him.*

Mahiru didn't move. Even if they attacked from behind, the possibility of winning is almost zero——she was sure of this.

"Damn…… If only the power of the 《Kiju》 was completed……"

She mumbled reluctantly, sheathing her sword.

Guren looked at that sword. *It already has such power and yet it's not completed. Of course, if the power cannot be controlled, then from this point of view it is not completed yet.*

"The power still can be increased?"

Hearing Guren's question, Mahiru smiled faintly.

"…… My time is up, so I can't explain it to you. But as I said earlier, you will definitely choose the same path as me. Because the《Oni》is already inside you."

Mahiru ran over to the chimera's body and picked it up.

At the same time, the sound of helicopters was heard coming from above.

Mahiru looked up at the sky,

"…… 《Hyakuya Church》 has already realised the chimera is dead, so they have sent someone. Guren, you better leave now……"

Mahiru stopped her words. She looked at her feet, on the floor, somehow there were a few talismans already distributed throughout to form an enchantment……

"Ah…… when did you wake up, Shinya?"

Mahiru asked.

Guren realised there was someone behind him. Without looking, he knew it was Shinya.

Shinya had a silly smile and answered.

"Ah, the fiancée and ex-boyfriend are whispering sweet nothings to each other, how could I stay asleep?"

"So you're saying you were awake from the start?"

"Yup."

"You pretended to faint?"

"If I didn't do that, would you have spoken the truth?"

"It's because you're not good enough."

"Ahaha. I thought I tried very hard."

Shinya laughed as he stood next to Guren and whispered to him.

“Guren.”

“What?”

“Help me capture Mahiru.”

“……”

“If we leave her be, she will be destroyed. You understand right?”

Of course I understand. What Mahiru is doing is too dangerous. It’s leading her straight down the path of destruction. No, maybe, it’s already too late.

Guren touched his fully attached right arm.

Arm regeneration——this is definitely not a human power.

Guren looked at Mahiru, then said to Shinya standing next to him.

“Hey Shinya.”

“Mm?”

“You really like Mahiru that much?”

Shinya laughed.

“Who knows? How do I say this…… I’ve just been trained to be like this…… How about you?”

“She’s just someone I’ve long forgotten about.”

“Haha, doesn’t seem like it to me.”

“But, I’m very interested in the sword in her hand. The chimera experiment, as well as all the intelligence that she knows. So……”

Guren stood up. He took his sword with his right hand. The grip on his right hand had already been restored. Whether it was because of the 《Oni》 curse or other reasons, Guren wasn’t sure.

But on the other hand, the injuries on my left hand and my ribs caused by the vampire attack still have not healed. It looks like the power of the 《Kiju》 *has left my body.*

So Guren raised his sword,

“Mahiru, I’m going to stop you.

And said to her.

Mahiru looked at them, her face smiling happily.

“You know fully well that you’re no match for me.”

“The gap between you and me is not normally……”

But Guren had already rushed forward. His right hand raising his sword,

“You talk too much! JUST SHUT UP!!!!!!!!!!!!”

With one breath, he cut Mahiru down.

At the same time, Shinya placed talismans all over the ground, binding Mahiru’s legs. Mahiru’s actions——have slowed down.

But the effect was too small. It was unable to overcome the gap between Mahiru and Guren.

Mahiru smiled regretfully,

“Next time we meet, I’ll be very happy if you two became stronger.”

Saying this, she prepared to step back. Completely disregarding Shinya’s spells, ready to retreat.

But Guren’s target from the start was not Mahiru. He knew that he was no match for her.

So his sword caught something else.

The half chimera corpse that Mahiru was carrying. His sword pierced it. And he pulled it out. A part of the flesh went flying over.

“Ah.”

Mahiru let out an expectedly surprised sound and looked at Guren,

“Ah ah, so this was what you wanted. But, if you’re giving it to Hiiragi House——”

“Don’t worry, I’m not going to give it to them.”

“I see. Well that’s good…… But for a traitor like me, it doesn’t make a difference.”

“Oi, Mahiru.”

“What is it?”

“You win this time. But I’ll quickly catch up to you.”

Hearing this, Mahiru smiled really happily and answered.

“Mm, I’ll be waiting for you.”

Saying this, Mahiru turned around carrying the half chimera body and left.

Guren watched her back, then turned around. He looked at Shinya who was holding part of the chimera body and said.

“Give that to me. Or else……”

Guren held his sword up.

If Shinya is actually working for the Hiiragi House and he were to give that chimera part to them——so, he might be playing both sides.

I have no choice but to kill Hiiragi Shinya——

But Shinya just smiled at him and said.

“Oi oi, in your exhausted state, you still wish to fight me?”

“A good handicap, right?”

“Ah, I’m underestimated again.”

Then, Shinya’s body had already vanished. *An illusion. Shinya’s physical capabilities aren’t strong, but he is cunning and can use various spells to trick.*

Guren closed his eyes and searched for Shinya’s presence.

His presence was behind. Before he could attack, Guren decided to make a pre-emptive strike——

But he stopped.

From behind him, Shinya threw over the chimera part.

Then, the illusion also finished. Shinya had left Guren and ran to wake the other comrades up.

Guren caught the chimera part——he had caught a piece of a sharp blade-like claw.

So, it’s like this then.

Shinya had given the chimera part to Guren. So now the right to investigate and research this thing had fallen to the Ichinose House.

Goshi and Mito, Sayuri and Shigure were slowly waking up. The two subordinates had noticed Guren’s figure and frantically ran over. They saw his broken left hand and wounds all over his body, the two of them were all worried and confused.

Goshi and Mito also came over, asking Guren to retreat as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, Guren had been thinking.

“……”

Whether or not to kill Goshi and Mito.

If I were to kill the two of them here and disappear, the Hiiragi House won’t immediately send someone to investigate. But it might not be enough time to investigate the chimera.

So should I do it?

I should move forward, shouldn’t I?

Holding the sword on his right hand, he concentrated.

This time, Mito touched Guren’s body covered with wounds and asked him.

“You…… you saved me again?”

No. I want to kill you.

Then, Goshi also spoke.

“Damn, why are we always saved by you?”

These two are idiots. It’s far from the truth.

However, Mito continued.

“No matter what happens from today onwards, I’ll risk my life to protect you.”

Lastly, Shinya whispered into Guren’s ear.

“…… Hey Guren. You aren’t going to turn into Mahiru, are you?”

“……”

“But I don’t think that is weak. It could be said that if you made the same choice as Mahiru, then we wouldn’t have needed to save her.”

“……”

“What are you thinking, Guren?”

Guren replied to his question.

His tone was dull,

“…… I’m a little tired.”

Then he softened his grip on his left hand holding the sword. And inserted the sword straight onto the ground.

In that moment, his strength had collapse. His injuries were worse than he thought. *Not sure whether it’s from the excessive blood loss from my right hand or from the impact of the vampire attack.*

The part of the right arm that was reattached started to hurt.

An intense pain.

Guren thought he saw a black curse permeating from his joint. Feeling that black thing coursing through his blood, spreading throughout his whole body.

Then he kneeled on the ground.

His subordinates cried out,

“Guren-sama!”

Guren just heard their voices fading away.

Then he lost consciousness in the enemy territory.

◆

◆

◆

I had a dream.

A really strange dream.

In the darkness, there is something standing in the middle of the dream.

That thing was talking.

《Hey Guren, didn't you really want to kill them?》

That voice sounded very happy.

It happily asked away.

《Goshi, Mito, Shinya, Sayuri, Shigure, didn't you want to kill all of them?》

It seemed to jump happily in the darkness and continued.

《But, you will soon be able to do it, don't worry. You will be able to kill people very easily. Even if you killed your own comrades, you wouldn't mind.》

I asked it.

Towards the darkness in the middle, I asked.

"Who are you?"

The voice replied.

《I am you.》

"Who are you?"

《I am you.》

"Who……?"

《Ah so annoying. I'm the Demon. Attached to your feelings of revenge and ambition. I'm a Demon like you.》

"……"

《We are already of one body. Hey hey, can you hear that? Each time your heart beats, you and I will become more connected.》

"……"

《Hey hey, can you hear that? You've already stepped into the same world like Mahiru. Welcome, Guren. Welcome to the world of the Black Demon. I've always been waiting for someone as strong as you, greedy human.》

"……"

《Alright, wake up. You're already not human. You're no longer human. So use this desire and hatred, love and sorrow, and this big ambition, together with me let's destroy this ugly human world! 》

The demon——No, I cried out.

*Literal translation of this kanji is “Death Blood Curse”.

*Literal translation of this kanji is “Mad Demon”.

Volume 2 Epilogue – Sayuri’s Love

“…… Ah, Guren-sama.”

A girl’s voice.

Guren opened his eyes slightly after hearing her.

“Guren-sama. Guren-sama.”

The girl continued to call his name. Guren already knew who it was.

Sayuri.

Guren looked towards the direction of the voice. Then realised where he was.

Not at the school in Shibuya.

And also not at Ueno where he lost consciousness.

He is in the Aichi mountains where only the Ichinose House and followers of the 『Mikado no Tsuki』 live. In a big mansion in the town centre, Guren was resting in the bedroom inside.

Sayuri had been waiting on the other side of the sliding door the entire time. Whenever he was injured during training, Sayuri and Shigure would be taking turns taking care of him.

Sayuri opened the slide doors slightly.

Guren looked at her and tried to get up.

Sayuri, suddenly widened her eyes,

“You’re, you’re awake!”

Her voice was full of joy. Sayuri rushed into the rush, no, more than that, she threw herself on Guren and hugged him tightly.

Due to the pressure on his body, Guren’s chest suddenly started hurting. *Looks like a broken*

rib. Left hand also feels heavy. Not only my fingers, but the whole arm was in plaster.

Sayuri almost started to cry.

“You haven’t woken up, I was worried to death! Guren-sama, you’ve already…… been in a coma for a month…… Everyone, everyone said that you wouldn’t wake up…… I…… I never believed……”

From her words, I roughly figured out what happened.

Sayuri couldn’t hold back the tears in her eyes. Her face became wet. To hide her embarrassment, Sayuri put her face on Guren’s chest,

“Uuuuuuuuuuh~”

And started to cry.

Guren lowered his head and saw Sayuri crying,

“……”

It has already been…… a month, huh?

It should be July now.

This has been a long period of time. A really, really long period of time. Since the situation can change at a moment’s notice, a month can be deadly.

Guren stroked Sayuri’s head on his chest and sat up.

Guren wanted to confirm the time, but there was no clock in the room. But, from the half-opened sliding door, he could tell it was late at night.

Guren asked.

“…… What is the date today?”

But Sayuri was still,

“Uuuuuuh~”

Crying on his chest.

Guren smiled wryly and stroked her hair until she calmed down. Then asked again,

“Sayuri, what date is it today?”

Sayuri lifted her head from his chest with a look of annoyance on her face and said.

“…… You still care about the date in your situation?”

“Ah?”

“…… Please don’t do any more dangerous things. You’re always making everyone worried about you. Even if I had a few lives, it wouldn’t be enough!”

“……”

“Why don’t you just live here peacefully? Like Guren-sama’s father, just live here peacefully away from the centre of it all.”

I’ve been lectured by Sayuri.

Peacefully live life——

Indeed, this is a choice. Grovelling at Hiiragi family’s feet, living in fear like a slave——I also really don’t have this choice.

That is, it’s just not for me. I’ve never even thought of this before.

Guren spoke.

“It really is dangerous following me. If you don’t want to any more, I can remove you from……”

Sayuri angrily interrupted him.

“I never thought about leaving you!”

“Ah?”

“I don’t mean it that way!”

Sayuri started to cry again. She looked at Guren, her face started to redden——

“Guren-sama, you’ve always……”

Saying that, Sayuri went silent.

Guren asked.

“Always what?”

Sayuri did not say a word.

“Always what? Don’t just stop halfway.”

Sayuri raised her eyebrows and stuttered.

“Guren-sama, up until now, you’ve always……”

“Spit it out.”

“Always liked Hiiragi Mahiru?”

Sayuri asked the question finally.

When she said it, tears overflowed from Sayuri’s eyes. Like they had been accumulating for a long time.

“…… The reason why you’ve never stopped gaining power was to take back Hiiragi Mahiru?”

Her voice was shaking.

It seems she has been thinking about this the whole time. Guren looked at Sayuri silently. It seemed that Sayuri was a bit shy that she buried her head in his chest again.

“I’m, I’m sorry…… I’m just talking nonsense….. and starting crying……”

Her words choking.

Guren shook his head.

“It doesn’t matter.”

“…… B, but……”

“You’re right. I did all this for one selfish reason, you see……”

Sayuri then interrupted him.

“No, that’s not it!”

“Not it?”

“No, I’m not blaming you.”

“Then what is it?”

Then a “uuuh~” sound came from Sayuri. Almost like she was moaning. After a few “uuuh~”, she looked determined and then said,

“…… Ah, ah, this……”

“Hmph?”

“Actually, I was jealous…… Guren-sama, you really like Hiiragi Mahiru…… I, I……”

“……”

“So there is no room left for me……”

“Ah?”

Guren tiredly said.

“So you wanted to say that?”

“Ehhhhhhh, what, what are you saying? I really took a lot of courage to say that.”

Sayuri looked surprised.

But Guren frowned and replied.

“Didn’t I just wake up from a coma? Don’t drag me into your foolish conversations.”

“Fool, foolish…… No, no, no, talking about that during this time would not be very sensible……”

As Sayuri looked at Guren, her face turned bright red,

“Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah, I’ve accidentally confessed!!!!!!”

Now Sayuri was screaming.

Really so noisy.

Guren really wanted to laugh. In fact, he smiled. Then his ribs started to ache.

Sayuri noticed it,

“Ah, ah, Guren-sama, are you in pain?”

Hearing her concern, Guren shook his head.

“No, not a problem.”

“Then, Guren-sama……”

“What do you want to say now?”

Sayuri spoke. She stared straight at Guren.

“…… Then, I, I’m unable to fill the gap in Guren-sama’s heart?”

Guren didn’t expect her to ask this. After that mangled confession, her expression this time was serious.

It looked at Sayuri made up her mind to tell me this after I woke up.

Her face was all red, but she looked serious.

“I really admire Guren-sama.”

Guren looked at Sayuri. From the ajar sliding door behind, the moonlight fell on her, making her look very elegant.

If she wasn’t following me, she would be a normal, happy high school student. Good style, intelligent, blessed with good looks. There is no need for a girl like her to be fighting to the death against enemies.

And also to like someone like me who might die at any time,

“You’re an idiot.”

Hearing Guren’s words, Sayuri smiled.

“Liking Guren-sama, this feeling, ah so silly~ I have…… ahh~ I’ve only ever thought about it twice.”

“Haha, really?”

“Yes.”

But Guren replied.

“I cannot respond to your feelings.”

All of a sudden, Sayuri changed her expression.

“Then, then, I really……”

“No, it’s not that I hate you.”

“Eh!?”

“I just don’t have time. Your foolish ambitions are a handful for me. So you should just give up”

“That, that, that, but, but, then, that means I still have a chance?”

“No, I said you should give up……”

“But you don’t hate me right?”

“Ah.”

“So that means that you like me?”

“What on earth is your train of thought?”

“Ah then can you touch my head one more time?”

Sayuri was ready to hug Guren,

“Alright, STOP~!”

Then the sliding doors opened and Shigure rushed in and gave Sayuri a kick.

“Kyah!”

Then Sayuri went flying out. Shigure looked at the Sayuri rolling on the ground and said in a low voice,

“Sneak—ing a—round? ——Isn’t that a bit too much?”

“Auuh~”

“Before your confession, I was protecting you as a friend, but now, I can’t!”

“But, but, Yuki-chan, I wanted my head to be touched one more time!”

“That aside, haven’t you forgotten that Guren-sama was in a coma for a month! Have some self-restraint!”

“Auh, yes.”

Sayuri nodded.

Shigure looked at Guren and asked.

“Guren-sama, how is your body?”

Guren replied.

“I’m fine.”

Guren said as he moved his body. His body was more flexible that he expected. Generally speaking, being bedridden for a month would have weakened the body, but it didn’t happen to him.

“……”

Then Guren looked at his right hand. His arm was fully grown and his fingers were flexible.

He used his fingers to strongly grab the tatami mat. Even his fingers got stuck into it.

Then, there was a voice in his head.

Mahiru's voice.

『But you're no longer human. Though your arm was cut in half, you can even see a scar on it. A little by little, your soul……』

Is being devoured by the《Oni》——*that was what she wanted to say.*

Guren looked at his right hand, then stood up. He lifted the sleeve of his yukata. Where his arm was cut, there really wasn't a scar there.

"My hand…… what happened?"

Shigure answered.

"Apparently it was fractured, but you have showed great resilience. The cast was taken out in just two weeks."

Shigure was referring to the left hand. Looks like she doesn't know anything about what happened to the right. So that means that before I lost consciousness, my right hand was already fine.

No, even the fracture. The left hand that was injured by the vampire couldn't have healed that quickly. But, she said that they took off the cast in two weeks. Is this healing ability human?

"Hand me my phone. The one that isn't bugged."

Shigure took out a phone from her pocket. *Looks like this is a new one. Shigure always prepares a few phones.*Guren dialled the number for the『Mikado no Tsuki』sorcery research lab.

"Guren-sama——so you're really awake?"

"Yeah, sorry to have made you worry. This time, I need you to do something for me."

"What can I do?"

"About the 《Kiju》research, are we still doing it?"

"You mean…… 《Kiju》? But that is a curse that cannot be developed……"

Guren interrupted the other person.

"Someone has succeeded. I've touched their equipment and I may have been cursed."

"……"

The other person immediately became nervous.

"So we need to find a way to resolve this. The experiment subject will be me. Study the curse inside my body, and then we can also progress with the 《Kiju》research."

"…… I understand. Then when shall we start……"

“Immediately.”

“Yes.”

Guren hung up the phone. Then turned to Sayuri and Shigure next to him and asked.

“Tell me. The chimera body part that I was holding, did the Hiiragi House take it away?”

The two of them tilted their heads and thought for a while,

“Body part? Guren-sama, you weren’t holding any such thing like a body part.”

Then, Guren understood who took it. *Shinya.*

“Sayuri, what’s Shinya’s number?”

Sayuri told Guren. Guren immediately dialled it.

“Who——?”

Guren didn’t say anything and quickly hung up.

Then, Shinya used another number to call again.

“Alright, who are you? You didn’t have to worry even if you had said something, that phone wasn’t tapped.”

Guren spoke.

“Because you’re not that important to the Hiiragi House?”

“Ohh, you’re Guren. So you’re finally awake?”

“Yeah.”

“I even thought you had died. Mito couldn’t stop crying.”

“Haha, that’s fine with me.”

“So, now, what’s the reason for this call? The chimera piece?”

“Yes. So did you take it? Or the Hiiragi House?”

Shinya replied to his question.

“I’ve hidden it.”

“Give it back.”

“Haha, I thought you’d say something like that. But, I’m not that confident that I can conceal this from the Hiiragi House and 《Hyakuya Church》 while I send it over to Aichi. So Guren come back to Tokyo. There is no truth there.”

“……”

“And the 《Hyakuya Church》 is going to initiate contact. Because Mahiru had betrayed them, they hope to get some information from us. About the 《Kiju》 and the chimera business, it seems that they might reveal some information to us.”

“……”

“Together with me, engulf the Hiiragi House from the inside……”

Then, Guren,

“You’re an idiot, you’ve said too much.”

And immediately hung up.

◆

Ten days have passed since then.

It was already in the middle of July.

Soon it would be the summer vacation.

Guren was once again in class at First Shibuya High School. But he was totally late, it was already 8:15.

It was the middle of the morning period. Homeroom teacher Aichi Saia was in front at the podium talking to the class.

Guren opened the doors to the classroom.

And walked in.

Then all at once, the students and homeroom teacher looked at him.

Of course, this also meant Mito and Goshi.

Mito looked shocked, then her face full of happiness, she looked like she was almost going to cry.

Goshi was also smiling happily.

But Guren ignored them all. He just walked into the classroom and sat at his seat.

Shinya who was seated next to him greeted him.

“Hey, welcome back.”

“Just shut up.”

“You’ve arrived a bit late.”

“I had a lot of things to do.”

“Really? I also have a lot of interesting things to report to you.”

“You talk too much.”

“And you’re always saying such mean things.”

“Hah.”

“Hehe, doesn’t matter. While you were being Sleeping Beauty, the war has progressed a lot.

So let’s work hard together eh?”

Hearing Shinya’s words, Guren looked at the classroom, then turned to look outside the window. He gazed outside, his mood the same as the cloudless sky.

If what Mahiru said is true——

If the world will really end this Christmas, then this might be the world’s last peaceful summer.

Staring at the piercing sun, Guren muttered softly.

“My war had already begun during my childhood.”

“Eh?”

Shinya seemed like he didn’t hear what Guren had said, so Guren didn’t say any more.

He only continued to stare outside the window at the sun that seemed to make people drowsy.

“It’s hot as hell, damn.”

Guren complained softly.

The time was ticking away, second by second.

Towards the end of the world.

Towards the bloodline of the World.

It is a day that no one wishes it would come.

No, no one would even think of such a thing.

However, the time still ticks away, towards the end of the world.

Later, there would be people who would say, humans are too arrogant.

And other people who would say, humans have committed the unforgiveable sin.

This is the truth of the story.

Before the extinction of humanity——until the end of the Seraph sound their horn, the hammer of judgement will fall on the world, humans will sadly struggle to call out the story of love——

Volume 2 Afterword

It’s Owari no Seraph——volume two of the light novel.

What does everyone think about it?

The comic tells the story of the world after destruction, this book tells the story of what happens to the world before the destruction——before the world gets destroyed on Christmas in December, since the destruction has already been revealed in the comic, that’s why the story is going at a unrelenting pace.

But, how did the world get destroyed? This is slowly being revealed.

For what reason?

By who?

And how?

The complex information around the characters will become clearer. The characters in the comic have already been exposed——in the light novel. How will the story develop next? I hope everyone will support it!

So to write a story about a world that already has its collapse determined, that's how it is. My crazy schedule has also collapsed, as for the current state of the author, so now it has been published together with the first volume. So this is how the situation is currently like.

However, such a conversation also happened.

Supervisor-san: Ah Kagami-san? How is your latest writing going~?

Me: Ahhhhhh, alright. I guess I just need to write. I understand, sorry about it.

Supervisor-san: No no, it doesn't matter if you write like the first volume. Rather it's because time was running out so it's the same as the first volume? It's okay if it's only like this once.

Me: Ehhh, about that……

Supervisor-san: So just write! Don't worry. Then afterwards you can just write all this down in the afterword. Kill two birds with one stone!

Me: Alright!

So that's why I've just written down the same content as the first volume. It's definitely not because I'm lazy, it's to link up with this afterword so it was deliberately written to end this way——alright, in fact, I just didn't have enough time, sorry about that!

Anyway, I've also written an《Owari no Seraph》short story for Monthly Shounen Jump!

Although it feels a bit weird to talk about the Shueisha weekly in the afterword of a Kodansha book, but I hope that everyone will cooperate and let these two companies prosper, so everyone please support!

I guess I'll finish off here.

Everyone, thank you for your support!

Kagami Takaya